

Section 37 Applications for Proposed Overhead Line Works at Weston Marsh

**Report to Inform the Screening Decision
under The Electricity Works
(Environmental Impact Assessment)
(England and Wales) Regulations 2017**

June 2026

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1. Introduction

- 1.1.1 National Grid Electricity Transmission plc (National Grid) is proposing to undertake works to construct a new electricity substation, new sections of overhead line and modification of existing overhead lines (the Scheme), south west of the Spalding Tee-Point, within the administrative boundary of South Holland District Council (SHDC) in Lincolnshire.
- 1.1.2 In totality, the Scheme consists of four components, each planned to be progressed via separate consenting routes. These are summarised in **Table 1.1**.

Table 1.1 Components of the Scheme

Works Required	Consenting Regime
Construction of the new Air Insulated Substation (AIS) – 400kV Weston Marsh Substation A, associated landscaping and environmental mitigation works, drainage, highways and other associated works	Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (Ref 1) (TCPA) Component referred to as ‘ Substation Works ’
Construction of new sections of overhead line to connect the new substation into the existing 4ZM overhead line Removal of a section of the existing 4ZM overhead line Other associated works	Section 37 of the Electricity Act 1989 (Ref 2) and deemed consent pursuant to section 90(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 Component referred to as ‘ S37 4ZM Overhead Line Works ’
Construction of a new section of overhead line to connect the new substation into the existing 2WS overhead lines Removal of a section of the existing 2WS overhead line Other associated works	Section 37 of the Electricity Act 1989 and deemed consent pursuant to section 90(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 Component referred to as ‘ S37 2WS Overhead Line Works ’
Reconductoring works required on the existing 4ZM overhead line Two spans of temporary overhead lines	The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (Ref 3) and The Overhead Lines (Exemption) (England and Wales) Regulations 2009 (Ref 4) Component referred to as ‘ Exempt Overhead Line Works ’

- 1.1.3 The Substation Works will require consent from SHDC under the TCPA. A planning application was submitted for the Substation Works on the 11 May 2026 (Planning Application).
- 1.1.4 The new S37 4ZM Overhead Line Works and S37 2WS Overhead Line Works (collectively referred to as ‘the S37 Overhead Line Works’) require consent from the

Secretary of State (SoS) for the Department of Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ) under Section 37 of the Electricity Act 1989 (Section 37).

- 1.1.5 The Exempt Overhead Line Works constitute permitted development under Part 15 Class B of the Town and Country (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 and The Overhead Lines (Exemption) (England and Wales) Regulations 2009.
- 1.1.6 The Scheme Site Boundary, which consists of the land required to construct and operate the Scheme in its entirety, is illustrated on **Figure 1**. As set out in further detail within **Section 2**, the Scheme in its totality is a standalone development to enable connection of the Outer Dowsing Offshore Wind Farm to the national electricity transmission system. Each component included in **Table 1.1** is required for the Scheme to fully function as part of the national electricity transmission system (NETS).

1.2 Purpose of this Report

- 1.2.1 Where applications for Section 37 consent are required, the relevant regulations include The Electricity Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) (England and Wales) Regulations 2017 (the EIA Regulations) (Ref 5).
- 1.2.2 As discussed in further detail in section 3, Schedule 2 of the EIA Regulations specifies development which requires screening if no Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Report is provided in support of the application for section 37 consent.
- 1.2.3 National Grid has not prepared an EIA Report in support of the applications for Section 37 consent on the basis that the Scheme is not considered to constitute EIA Development as defined by the EIA Regulations. The purpose of this report is therefore to provide the SoS for DESNZ with supporting information to inform a formal screening decision in relation to the S37 Overhead Line Works (Screening Decision). It specifically describes the findings of a screening assessment undertaken by National Grid, taking account of the criteria set out within Schedule 3 of the EIA Regulations.
- 1.2.4 Plans illustrating the location of the Scheme and surrounding environmental constraints (**Figure 1 Scheme Site Boundary** and **Figure 2 Environmental Constraints Plan**) are also provided.
- 1.2.5 In accordance with the requirements set out under regulation 12 of the EIA Regulations, the information contained within this report is set out in **Table 1.2**.

Table 1.2 Information Contained within this Report to Inform the Screening Decision

Information required in accordance with EIA Regulations	Location in Report
12(1)(a) a description of the development, including in particular— (i) a description of the physical characteristics of the whole development and, where relevant, of demolition works; (ii) a description of the location of the development, with particular regard to the	Section 4 The Scheme

environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected;	
12(1)(b) a description of the aspects of the environment likely to be significantly affected by the development;	Section 5 Characteristics of Predicted Impacts and Likely Effects
12(1)(c) a description of any likely significant effects, to the extent of the information available on such effects, of the development resulting from— (i) the expected residues and emissions and the production of waste, where relevant; and (ii) the use of natural resources, in particular soil, land, water and biodiversity; and	Section 5 Characteristics of Predicted Impacts and Likely Effects
12(3) a description of any features of the development and any measures envisaged to avoid or prevent what might otherwise be significant adverse effects on the environment.	Section 5 Characteristics of Predicted Impacts and Likely Effects

- 1.2.6 Given the Substation Works require consent under the TCPA, an EIA screening request was made to SHDC under the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 for the Substation Works. SHDC determined that these works do not constitute EIA development and therefore an Environmental Statement (ES) was not required in support of the planning application for the Substation Works. The Planning Application for the Substation Works was submitted to SHDC on 11 May 2026 and validated on 18 May 2026.
- 1.2.7 This Report to Inform the Screening Decision considers the works which constitute the Scheme in its totality, and the specific works for which consent will be sought under Section 37 of the Electricity Act 1989.
- 1.2.8 **Section 5** of this report - Characteristics of Predicted Impacts and Likely Effects - examines each discipline topic in turn. For each topic, baseline information about the receiving environment is presented first, followed by a screening of potential impacts and effects of the S37 4ZM Overhead Line Works and S37 2WS Overhead Line Works (collectively referred to as the 'S37 Overhead Line Works'), as well as the wider components of the Scheme illustrated on **Figure 1 Scheme Site Boundary**.

2. Background

- 2.1.1 National Grid is undertaking a major overhaul of the electricity grid, known as the 'Great Grid Upgrade'. The objective of the Great Grid Upgrade is to help connect more clean, secure energy to homes and businesses across England and Wales, reinforcing the country's electricity network and supporting the UK's commitment to reaching net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050.
- 2.1.2 The Great Grid Upgrade comprises 17 major infrastructure projects, one of which is the Grimsby to Walpole Project in Lincolnshire and Norfolk. Grimsby to Walpole is a proposal to reinforce the transmission network with a new 400 kV electricity transmission line over a distance of approximately 140 km, starting from a new 400 kV substation west of the town of Grimsby in North East Lincolnshire and ending at a new 400 kV substation west of the village of Walpole St Andrew and north of the town of Wisbech, in King's Lynn and West Norfolk District (the Project). The Project also includes the construction of two new 400 kV Lincolnshire Connection Substations located south-west of Mablethorpe in East Lindsey, two new 400 kV Weston Marsh substations, south west of the Spalding Tee-Point in South Holland District and the decommissioning (in full or part) of the existing Grimsby West Substation.
- 2.1.3 The Project is a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP), as defined under section 16 of the Planning Act 2008 (Ref 6) (PA 2008) and therefore requires a Development Consent Order (DCO) to be secured prior to construction commencing. The Project is currently at pre-application stage and is expected to be submitted to the SoS in Summer 2027, with construction currently planned to start in 2029 and will conclude in 2033.
- 2.1.4 The new Weston Marsh Substation A, one of the proposed Grimsby to Walpole substations, will serve as a critical connection point for several renewable energy projects. These include the Outer Dowsing Offshore Wind Farm (referred to as Outer Dowsing), which is also an NSIP requiring a DCO. Outer Dowsing comprises a 1.5 gigawatt (GW) offshore wind farm located approximately 54 km off the Lincolnshire coastline. This is a joint venture developed by Corio (and its affiliates), TotalEnergies and Gulf Energy Development. It involves the installation of up to 100 turbines. The electricity generated will be transmitted via underground cables from Wolla Bank. Upon completion, it is anticipated to generate renewable electricity for over 1.6 million households, significantly contributing to the UK's target of 50 GW of renewable energy generation from offshore wind by 2030 (listed as one of the UK Government's '10 Point Plan', contributing to net zero carbon by 2050).
- 2.1.5 The Outer Dowsing DCO application was accepted for examination by the SoS and the examination stage was subsequently completed between 10 October 2024 and 10 April 2025. The Outer Dowsing DCO was granted on 10 February 2026. As such, Outer Dowsing is currently at a more advanced stage than the Grimsby to Walpole Project and will commence construction at an earlier date (currently anticipated to be 2027).
- 2.1.6 Under Section 9(2) of the Electricity Act 1989, National Grid has a duty:

- 1) to develop and maintain an efficient, coordinated, and economical system of electricity transmission; and
- 2) to facilitate competition in the supply and generation of electricity. This includes a statutory obligation to offer to connect any new generating stations or interconnectors applying to connect to the transmission system.

- 2.1.7 An evaluation of two possible grid connection options (the ‘Lincolnshire Node’ and Weston Marsh) was considered in the Outer Dowsing Preliminary Information Environmental (PEI) Report. Following the publication of the PEI Report, Outer Dowsing received confirmation from National Grid Electricity Systems Operator (NGESO) (now National Energy System Operator (NESO)) in August 2023 that the confirmed grid connection for Outer Dowsing would be Weston Marsh. As part of the connection agreement between NESO and Outer Dowsing (and therefore the reciprocal contractual agreement between NESO and National Grid), a connection point onto the transmission system must be made available by 2030.
- 2.1.8 Elements of the proposed new Weston Marsh Substation A will therefore need to be operational before the Grimsby to Walpole Project’s programmed connection date of 2033. National Grid is therefore seeking to bring forward the delivery of these elements, which constitute the Scheme, via separate consents to the Grimsby to Walpole DCO. This will facilitate earlier operation of the infrastructure required to connect Outer Dowsing to the transmission network.

3. Determining the Need for EIA

Schedule 1 and Schedule 2 Development

- 3.1.1 As set out within the EIA Regulations, development of a description set out in Schedule 1 requires an environmental impact assessment and the production of an EIA Report. The Scheme in its totality, inclusive of the S37 4ZM Overhead Line Works and S37 2WS Overhead Line Works, does not meet this definition and is not Schedule 1 development.
- 3.1.2 Pursuant of regulation 11(2), the EIA Regulations also stipulate that development of a description set out in Schedule 2 requires screening if no EIA report is provided in support of the application. The Scheme falls within the scope of both Paragraph 2(a) and Paragraph 3(b)(ii) of Schedule 2 of the EIA Regulations, as it includes development to provide a change to or extension of an electric line installed above ground with a voltage of 132 kilovolts or more (less than 2 km in total length).
- 3.1.3 National Grid has undertaken an assessment of whether the Scheme is likely to result in significant effects upon the environment as a result of either construction or operation. The findings of this screening assessment are set out within this Report to Inform the Screening Decision. It has been concluded that the Scheme is not likely to result in significant effects. Further rationale is provided within **Section 5**. On this basis, an EIA Report has not been prepared in support of the applications for section 37 consent. Therefore, a screening decision is required from the SoS for DESNZ.

Screening Criteria

- 3.1.4 Under paragraph 2(b) of Schedule 2, an electric line installed above ground in a sensitive area is required to be screened. Under paragraph 4 of Schedule 2, the EIA Regulations define a ‘sensitive area’ as being:
- 1) A Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), European Site or a Ramsar Site;
 - 2) A National Park, the Broads or an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) (now commonly referred to as National Landscapes)¹; or
 - 3) A World Heritage Site or scheduled monument.
- 3.1.5 As the Scheme is not located within or partly within these statutory designations, it is not located in a “sensitive area” as defined by the EIA Regulations.
- 3.1.6 Schedule 3 to the EIA Regulations sets out the relevant considerations in reaching a screening decision. To inform the SoS’s screening decision, this report draws upon a preliminary review of the environmental receptors within and adjacent to the Scheme Site Boundary and the surrounding area, together with requirements as set-out in the EIA Regulations. It considers the scale and characteristics of the Scheme (paragraph 1 of Schedule 3) in the context of the environmental sensitivity of the receiving environment (paragraph 2 of Schedule 3), as well as the likely impacts and whether

¹ As of 22nd November 2023 all designated AONBs in England and Wales have been rebranded as National Landscapes, but the AONB term remains in legislation.

these would be likely to result in significant effects upon the environment in accordance with paragraph 3 of Schedule 3 of the EIA Regulations, as follows:

- 1) the magnitude and spatial extent of the impact (for example, geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected);
- 2) the nature of the impact;
- 3) the transboundary nature of the impact;
- 4) the intensity and complexity of the impact;
- 5) the probability of the impact;
- 6) the expected onset, duration, frequency and reversibility of the impact;
- 7) the cumulation of the impact with the impact of other existing and approved developments; and
- 8) the possibility of effectively reducing the impact.

EIA Screening Procedure

- 3.1.7 Part 2, Chapter 2, regulation 10 of the EIA Regulations makes provision for a developer to request a screening decision in advance of an application for Section 37 consent. However, during pre-application engagement with the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ), National Grid were advised that regulation 11 of the EIA Regulations would be applied. That is, that the SoS would, with regard to the criteria set out in Schedule 3 of the EIA Regulations, make a screening decision in respect of the development before determining the S37 Application (rather than in advance of the application).
- 3.1.8 To inform the screening decision procedure, National Grid produced a draft Report to Inform the Screening Decision in November 2025. This document presented National Grid's own screening assessment of the Scheme based upon early design information and the initial Screening Boundary². The draft Report to Inform the Screening Decision was shared with Statutory Environmental Bodies (SEBs) specifically including the Environment Agency, Natural England and Historic England. Responses are included in **Appendix A**.
- 3.1.9 The draft Report to Inform the Screening Decision has provided the basis of this report, which has been refined to reflect the further development of the design undertaken since November 2025. This includes definition of the Scheme Site Boundary and more detailed design information. It is also noted that since issuing the draft Report to Inform the Screening Decision to the SEBs, a number of further technical environmental assessments have also been completed. These supporting documents are listed in **Table 3.1** and have been produced specifically to support the Planning Application for the Substation Works and the S37 Applications for the S37 4ZM Overhead Line Works and S37 2WS Overhead Line Works. This report does not seek to duplicate the information contained within the supporting documents. Its purpose is to describe any aspects of the environment likely to be significantly affected by the Scheme and a proportionate approach has been adopted, with

² The initial screening boundary consisted of a maximum potential extent of the land required to construct and operate the Scheme. This boundary has since been refined to the Scheme Site Boundary, which is the basis of the required consent applications.

reference to the Criteria set out within Schedule 3 of the EIA Regulations. However, the supporting documents may be read in conjunction with this Report to Inform the Screening Decision as required.

- 3.1.10 Where (as is the case in this instance) an application is not accompanied by an EIA report and the SoS decides to make a screening decision under regulation 11 of the EIA Regulations, the developer must provide the information referred to in regulation 12 to enable that decision to be made. In accordance with regulation 11(5)(b), the SoS will notify the developer that a screening decision will be made and may request the regulation 12 information if not already provided. This report has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of regulation 12, set out in **Table 1.2**, so that the SoS is in a position to make the screening decision at the time of determining the application.

Table 3.1 Supporting Documentation

Title	Document Reference
Agricultural Land Classification Report	GWNC-ARC-SS50-XXXXXX-RPT-ES-000002
Air Quality Assessment and Screening Assessment	GWNC-WSP-SS50-XXXXXX-RPT-ES-000004
Habitats Regulations Assessment Stage 1 Screening Report	GWNC-ARU-SS50-XXXXXX-RPT-ES-000013
Phase 1 Geo-environmental Desk Study	GWNC-WAA-SS50-XXXXXX-RPT-ES-000001
Historic Environment Desk Based Assessment	GWNC-ARU-SS50-XXXXXX-RPT-ES-000017
Landscape and Visual Appraisal	GWNC-GIL-SS50-XXXXXX-RPT-ES-000001
Landscape and Visual Photomontages	GWNC-GIL-SS50-XXXXXX-VIS-ES-000001
Indicative Landscape and Ecological Mitigation Proposals	GWNC-GIL-SS50-XXXXXX-PLN-ES-000001
Noise and Vibration Assessment	GWNC-ATG-SS50-XXXXXX-RPT-ES-000001
Transport Statement	GWNC-ARU-SS50-XXXXXX-RPT-ES-000018
Flood Risk Assessment	GWNC-WSP-SS50-XXXXXX-RPT-ES-000002
Water Framework Directive Assessment	GWNC-WSP-SS50-XXXXXX-RPT-ES-000003
Bat Survey Report	GWNC-ARU-SS50-XXXXXX-RPT-ES-000008
Badger Survey Report (Confidential)	GWNC-ARU-SS50-XXXXXX-RPT-ES-000007
Aquatic Survey Report	GWNC-ARU-SS50-XXXXXX-RPT-ES-000006
Breeding Bird Survey Report	GWNC-ARU-SS50-XXXXXX-RPT-ES-000009
Non-breeding Bird Survey Report	GWNC-ARU-SS50-XXXXXX-RPT-ES-000010
Otter and Water Vole Survey Report	GWNC-ARU-SS50-XXXXXX-RPT-ES-000012
Great Crested Newt Survey Report	GWNC-ARU-SS50-XXXXXX-RPT-ES-000011

Habitat Classification Survey Report	GWNC-ARU-SS50-XXXXXX-RPT-ES-000013
Cumulative Effects Assessment Report	GWNC-ARU-SS50-XXXXXX-RPT-ES-000020
Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan	GWNC-ARU-SS50-XXXXXX-RPT-ES-000019
Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan	GWNC-WSP-ZZZZ-ZZZZZZ-PLN-PM-000002

4. The Scheme

4.1 Location of the Scheme

- 4.1.1 The majority of the land required for construction of the Scheme (i.e. that within the Scheme Site Boundary), is located approximately 2.5 km north of Weston, 2.2 km east of Surfleet Seas End, and 2.3 km west of Moulton Seas End, south west the Spalding Tee-Point and the existing 4ZM and 2WS overhead lines. The Scheme Site Boundary is centred on Grid Reference 529446, 328696.
- 4.1.2 Land within the Scheme Site Boundary primarily consists of agricultural land that is Provisional Grade 1 Best and Most Versatile land. Access to the proposed construction works would be provided via Marsh Road and Stone Gate, which provide connections to the south via the A151. Highway improvement works are anticipated to be required in places along Stone Gate and as such, is included within the Scheme Site Boundary.
- 4.1.3 The Scheme Site Boundary covers an area of approximately 168 ha in total. Much of this area would be required temporarily to facilitate construction of each component of the Scheme. Land required permanently for the S37 Overhead Line Works is indicated on **Figure 1** and would include the extents of each new pylon foundation/base. Permanent easements would also be required over maintenance access routes and land under the new overhead line routes. Land would also be required permanently within the extents of the proposed substation and associated works, including a permanent access road and environmental mitigation areas (e.g. landscape mitigation planting). Subject to ongoing design and environmental surveys, the Scheme Site Boundary also includes land for drainage, anticipated ecological mitigation and potential environmental enhancement measures.

4.2 Summary of Surrounding Area

- 4.2.1 The Scheme Site Boundary is located within a semi-rural landscape, predominantly consisting of farmland. The existing 4ZM overhead line crosses the Scheme Site Boundary from west to east towards the northern edge of the Scheme Site Boundary. The existing 2WS overhead line crosses the Scheme Site Boundary in a broadly north to south alignment towards the eastern edge of the Scheme Site Boundary and provides a connection to the Spalding Power Station. **Figure 2 Environmental Constraints Plan** shows key environmental features within 1 km of the Scheme Site Boundary.
- 4.2.2 The Scheme Site Boundary is located in the proximity of Weston, Surfleet Seas End and Moulton Seas End as well as isolated hamlets and settlements. The Scheme Site Boundary is located in the proximity of several key highway links including the A16, A17, A47, A1101, A1139 and the A151.
- 4.2.3 No sites statutorily designated for their biodiversity value are present within the Scheme Site Boundary, however a number are present within the wider study area for ecology. These include The Wash Special Protection Area (SPA), Ramsar site and SSSI and The Wash and North Norfolk Coast Special Area of Conservation (SAC) within 10 km of the Scheme Site Boundary. There are two SSSIs (Surfleet

Lows SSSI and The Wash SSSI) and one Local Nature Reserve (LNR) (Vernatt's LNR) present within 5 km of the Scheme Site Boundary. With respect to non-statutory designated sites, four are located within 0.5 km of the Scheme Site Boundary: Surfleet Bank LWS, Surfleet Seas End Saltmarsh LWS, Vernatt's Drain LWS and River Glen Corridor LWS.

- 4.2.4 There is a total of 40 designated heritage assets within 2 km of the Scheme Site Boundary. These comprise two scheduled monuments, four grade I listed buildings, 33 grade II listed buildings and one conservation areas. Many of these assets are situated within the Moulton Conservation Area and the settlements of Weston and Moulton Seas End located to the south and south east of the Scheme Site Boundary.
- 4.2.5 There are several Public Rights of Way (PRoW) in the vicinity of the Scheme Site Boundary as shown on **Figure 2 Environmental Constraints Plan**. The nearest of these are a collection of public footpaths which cross the Scheme Site Boundary from east to west (Ref Wstn/8/1, Wstn/7/1 and Moul/2/1), as well as a bridleway (Ref Wstn/6/2). The Macmillan Way long-distance walking route runs along the River Welland to the north east of Spalding (approx. 400 m to the west of the Scheme Site Boundary).
- 4.2.6 The Environment Agency Flood Zone Maps identify that the majority of land within the Scheme Site Boundary lies in Flood Zone 3, with small areas within Flood Zone 2, and a very small area of Flood Zone 1. A Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) has been undertaken for the Scheme and submitted in support of the consent applications.
- 4.2.7 There are 16 areas of deciduous woodland within 1 km of the Scheme Site Boundary.
- 4.2.8 The Scheme Site Boundary is located within National Character Area 46: The Fens (NCA 46).

4.3 Characteristics of the Scheme

S37 4ZM Overhead Line Works

- 4.3.1 The reconfiguration of the existing 4ZM overhead line would be necessary to connect it in to and out of the new Weston Marsh Substation A. The new sections of overhead line would not exceed 0.9 km in total, split into two sections of up to 0.5 km and 0.4 km respectively. The first section would originate from new pylon 4ZM414-N and extend south to connect into the northern boundary of the new Weston Marsh Substation A. The second section would originate from the new Weston Marsh Substation A and extend east where it would connect into the new pylon 4ZM407-N.
- 4.3.2 In addition, 0.7 km of existing 4ZM overhead line and three existing pylons (4ZM414-N – 4ZM407-N) that currently run in parallel with the new Weston Marsh Substation A would be removed.

S37 2WS Overhead Line Works

- 4.3.3 The reconfiguration of the existing 2WS overhead line would be necessary to connect it into and out of the new Weston Marsh Substation A. This new section of overhead line would not exceed 0.9 km, originating from the new Weston Marsh Substation A and extending south east where it would connect into the existing 2WS line at pylon 2WS015.

- 4.3.4 In addition, approximately 0.8 km of existing 2WS overhead line and one existing pylon (2WS017 - 2WS015) that currently run south east of the new Weston Marsh A Substation would be removed.

Substation Works

- 4.3.5 The new Weston Marsh Substation A would be an Air Insulated Switchgear (AIS) substation. AIS substations use air as the insulation medium for electrical equipment meaning that equipment is predominantly located outdoors. The new Weston Marsh Substation A would be located within a secured fenced compound. The total footprint of the new Weston Marsh Substation A would be approximately 8.4 ha including a 5 m buffer around the fence line. The dimensions of the main compound are approximately 419.5 m by 185 m (approximately 7.8 ha), with an additional area of approximately 110 m by 50 m (approximately 0.6 ha) near the entrance for ancillary equipment and car parking. Within the new Weston Marsh Substation A there would be a range of specialist electrical equipment.
- 4.3.6 A permanent new access road approximately 390 m in length would be constructed as part of the Scheme to provide operational access to the infrastructure. This would be situated from Marsh Road to the north of the new Weston Marsh Substation A. During operation, workers would enter the new permanent access road via the A151, Stone Gate and Marsh Road.
- 4.3.7 Landscaping would be installed along the northern, western and southern facades of the new Weston Marsh Substation A to screen views of the new Weston Marsh Substation A from the surrounding landscape. Additional areas of filtering vegetation would be planted to the north west and south of the new Weston Marsh Substation A as well as alongside Marsh Road to further reduce visibility of the Scheme.
- 4.3.8 Several measures have also been proposed to protect skylarks and other farmland birds, barn owls, great crested newts and otters, as follows:
- 1) Approximately 35 hectares of agricultural land near Crowtree Farm would be converted to a different cropping regime to benefit skylarks and other farmland birds;
 - 2) An indicative habitat area for great crested newts and otter would be created in the same vicinity; and
 - 3) One barn owl box would also be installed situated a suitable distance away from the Scheme.
- 4.3.9 Road improvement works are also required in places of Stone Gate to widen the road for construction traffic and/or to introduce passing places along the route (also required for the S37 Overhead Line Works).
- 4.3.10 Drainage, ancillary works and other associated temporary construction works would also form part of the Substation Works.

Exempt Overhead Line Works

- 4.3.11 The Exempt Overhead Line Works would consist of 2.4 km of the existing 4ZM overhead line being reconducted with triple Araucaria conductor.
- 4.3.12 In addition, approximately 1.4 km of temporary overhead line, including two temporary pylons will be required to facilitate the overhead line turn-ins into Weston

Marsh Substation A. This would be removed following the completion of re-conductoring works and affected areas reinstated.

Site Access

- 4.3.13 The main access to the working areas for HGVs and LGVs would be provided via a temporary haul road originating from Stone Gate. This would be removed following the completion of construction and affected areas reinstated. Localised highway improvements would be required to Stone Gate to facilitate access.
- 4.3.14 Cars/vans (and therefore workers) would also be able to access the compounds and working areas via Marsh Road and Stone Gate, which run along the western and southern extents of the Scheme Site Boundary and continue to the south before joining the A151, which provides connections to the A16 and A17.

4.4 Construction and Commissioning

Sequence of Work

- 4.4.1 The Scheme would be designed, constructed and operated in accordance with all relevant health and safety legislation. It would also comply with design safety standards including the National Electricity Transmission System Security and Quality Supply Standard (NETS SQSS) (Ref 7), which defines the criteria and methodology for coordinating and operating the National Electricity Transmission System. The NETS SQSS informs a suite of National Grid policies and processes, which set out the design standards and thresholds that must be met when designing, constructing and operating assets such as the proposed overhead lines.
- 4.4.2 The overall construction and commissioning programme for the Scheme is expected to take approximately two and a half years to complete. The proposed S37 Overhead Line Works are however likely to be completed over a shorter duration within this estimated two and a half year period.
- 4.4.3 General preparatory activities would include the following:
 - 1) Completion of surveys, including archaeological investigation and ground investigation;
 - 2) Distribution Network Operator (DNO) enabling works;
 - 3) Installation of stock proof fencing and gates or equivalent;
 - 4) Vegetation clearance where required within the temporary works areas;
 - 5) Establishing temporary construction compounds;
 - 6) Topsoil stripping, temporary drainage installation where required; and
 - 7) Installation of access track, including installation of bellmouths and creation of visibility splays.
- 4.4.4 Construction and commissioning of the proposed Substation Works would broadly follow the sequence outlined below:
 - 1) Bulk earthworks - excavation, movement and placement of soil, rock or other materials to prepare the site for the construction of the proposed facility;

- 2) Civil works - including the construction of foundations using (but not limited to), piling, pre cast or cast in-situ methods for the substation;
- 3) Construction of buildings;
- 4) Installation of electrical equipment and connection into its respective circuits and control systems;
- 5) Site reinstatement and landscaping; and
- 6) Commissioning.

4.4.5 The construction of the S37 Overhead Line Works would follow the sequence outlined below:

- 1) Installation of pylon foundations (pad and column, precast, piled or bespoke);
- 2) Working area and layout of steelwork in preparation for erection;
- 3) Assembly (painting if required) and erection of steelwork;
- 4) Installation of pylon signage including safety notice plate and anti-climbing devices;
- 5) Installation of crossing protection (if required) prior to stringing of conductors, including scaffolding (if required);
- 6) Installation of insulator assemblies on suspension pylons;
- 7) Establishment of machine sites for conductor stringing;
- 8) Conductor and earthwire stringing;
- 9) Temporary earthing;
- 10) Installation of tension insulator assemblies on tension and terminal pylons;
- 11) Removal of construction equipment and reinstatement of ground and restoration of soils;
- 12) Removal of access tracks and bellmouths; and
- 13) Removal of construction compounds and ground reinstatement.

4.4.6 The construction of the Exempt Overhead Line Works would follow the sequence outlined below:

- 1) Installation of temporary pylons;
- 2) Transfer of connections;
- 3) Removal of existing conductors;
- 4) Re-stringing of new conductors; and
- 5) Removal of temporary pylons and ground reinstatement.

Environmental Management during Construction

4.4.7 An **Outline Construction Environment Management Plan (CEMP)** has been prepared for the Scheme in its entirety. This has been submitted with both the Planning Application and the S37 Applications and includes measures to mitigate

and manage construction impacts, including hours of operation, site management, noise abatement, dust management, pollution prevention and control etc. A final version of the CEMP would be submitted to the relevant authorities for approval prior to commencement of Scheme construction.

- 4.4.8 An **Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP)** has also been prepared for the Scheme in its entirety. This has also been submitted with both the Planning Application and the S37 Applications and sets out measures to control construction traffic to mitigate potential impacts on the local highway network and users.

Construction Working Hours

- 4.4.9 Proposed core working hours will be 07:00 to 19:00 Monday to Friday and 08:00 to 17:00 on Saturdays, Sundays, Bank Holidays and other Public Holidays.
- 4.4.10 The core construction working hours would exclude start up and close down activities which would take up to one hour before and one hour after the core construction working hours.
- 4.4.11 Some construction activities may take place outside of the proposed core working hours referred to above, to minimise disruption to the public.

Temporary Construction Compound

- 4.4.12 Four construction compounds would be required for the construction of the Scheme. The proposed main compound is situated to the north west of the new Weston Marsh Substation A and approximately 4 ha. This compound would provide parking, site offices and welfare facilities. Two satellite compound areas would also be required. The larger of these is approximately 3 ha, located to the south east of the new Weston Marsh Substation A, primarily for the storing of construction materials and equipment. The second is located north of the main construction compound and would be approximately 2 ha in area. This satellite compound would be used primarily to support the overhead line works. These compounds would be required for the entirety of the construction period and reinstated once construction is complete.
- 4.4.13 A further temporary satellite compound of approximately 2 ha would be required to the north of Stone Gate and in the vicinity of the proposed haul road. This compound would be established first and is required specifically for the establishment of the haul road and associated bellmouth. This compound may not be required for the entirety of the construction period and may be scaled back once the construction of the haul road is complete.
- 4.4.14 The temporary construction compounds would be fenced off (as required). Following the construction phase, the construction compounds would be removed, and the land restored, as appropriate.

Construction Site Security and Lighting

- 4.4.15 The necessary infrastructure and personnel to maintain a secure and safe construction site would be provided together with the equipment necessary to prevent unauthorised site access. All systems would be regularly inspected and maintained.
- 4.4.16 The construction site would be adequately lit to ensure safe working conditions. All lighting would be positioned and adjusted so that it does not cause a nuisance to

neighbouring properties. Night-time illumination, outside of working hours, would be minimised to reduce light pollution whilst maintaining the Site's security.

Operational Lighting

- 4.4.17 No operational lighting is required in relation to the S37 Overhead Line Works or the Exempt Overhead Line Works.
- 4.4.18 During operation, lighting would be required at the substation to allow for safe movement and the operation of equipment. Security lighting would also be required. All lighting would be designed in accordance with the appropriate design standards and National Grid technical specifications. For the purposes of the information presented in this report, it is assumed that the security lighting would be event activated (i.e. would not be permanently on) and would be designed to be environmentally sensitive (e.g. directional, downwards only and low light not exceeding 50 lux average).
- 4.4.19 Further information regarding substation lighting design has been provided in support of the Planning Application for the Substation Works.

4.5 Operation

- 4.5.1 The overhead line would be subject to annual inspection from the ground by foot patrol, small van, or by air using drone/helicopter to check for visible faults or signs of wear. The inspections would also indicate if plant/tree growth or third-party developments were at risk of affecting safety clearances. Inspections would provide input as to when refurbishment was required.
- 4.5.2 The overhead line could include fibre optic cables within the earth-wire which allows for remote monitoring of circuits. Access for the fibre optic cables would usually be at the joint box positions located just above anticlimbing devices on certain pylons. The position and frequency of joint boxes would be subject to detailed design. Temporary interlocking track mat panels may be required along these routes during maintenance activities.
- 4.5.3 The substation would typically be operated remotely during operation but would be subject to regular visual checks and inspection. Regular maintenance of the substation would also be undertaken.

4.6 Decommissioning

- 4.6.1 Owing to its nature, there would be no intention to decommission the Scheme. However, if the need arose, decommissioning would involve the removal of all above ground features using similar methods to those used for the construction phase.
- 4.6.2 In any scenario that involves decommissioning of the Scheme, a written scheme of decommissioning would be submitted to SHDC for approval at least six months prior to any decommissioning works. The decommissioning works would follow National Grid processes at the time for assessing and reducing any environmental impacts and risks.

5. Characteristics of Predicted Impacts and Likely Effects

5.1 Introduction

- 5.1.1 This section of the report seeks to assist DESNZ and statutory consultees by examining whether the Scheme would be likely to have significant effects on the environment.
- 5.1.2 The nature and extent of impacts (i.e. changes) predicted to occur as a result of the construction and operation of the Scheme are outlined. The potential for human or other environmental receptors to be affected (and specifically to experience a likely significant effect) as a consequence of these impacts is then considered, in the context of the location of the Scheme as outlined previously.
- 5.1.3 Unless otherwise specified, site preparation and construction impacts (and their resulting effects) are considered to be temporary in nature, limited in duration and reversible. The majority of operational impacts are considered to be long-term in nature.
- 5.1.4 As previously explained, a planning application for the new Weston Marsh Substation A has recently been submitted to SHDC under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. As such, an EIA Screening Opinion has previously been provided by SHDC, which confirms the Council's view that the Scheme does not constitute EIA Development.
- 5.1.5 Although the S37 Overhead Line Works and Substation Works are subject to separate consenting regimes, all components of the Scheme are intrinsically linked and will operate together as a single, integrated development once constructed. As such, whilst the report has sought to provide clarity regarding the likely impacts and effects of the S37 Overhead Line Works specifically, the effects arising from the Scheme in its entirety are also discussed within the following sections.

5.2 Ecology and Biodiversity

Baseline

- 5.2.1 No statutory designated ecological sites are present within the Scheme Site Boundary, however a number of statutory designated sites are present within the study area for ecology. This extends up to 30 km for designated sites depending on the qualifying features of the designation.
- 5.2.2 The Wash SPA, Ramsar site and SSSI and The Wash and North Norfolk Coast SAC fall within 10 km of the Scheme Site Boundary. In addition, Nene Washes SPA, Ramsar site and SSSI, where bird species with large foraging ranges are noted as, or one of, the qualifying features fall within 30 km of the Scheme Site Boundary. **Figure 2 Environmental Constraints Plan** shows key environmental features within 1 km of the Scheme Site Boundary.

- 5.2.3 There are two SSSIs (Surfleet Lows SSSI and The Wash SSSI) and one Local Nature Reserve (LNR) (Vernatt's LNR) present within 5 km of the Scheme Site Boundary. The Impact Risk Zones (IRZ's) for Surfleet Lows SSSI and The Wash SSSI partially overlap with the Scheme Site Boundary.
- 5.2.4 There are 12 sites that are non-statutorily designated for their biodiversity value as Local Wildlife Sites (LWSs), within 2 km of the Scheme.
- 5.2.5 Of the 12 Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) within 2 km of the Scheme Site Boundary, four are located within 0.5 km. These sites are non-statutorily designated for their nature conservation importance and are:
- 1) Surfleet Bank, located adjacent to the Scheme Site Boundary.
 - 2) Surfleet Seas End Saltmarsh, located approximately 68 m to the west of the Scheme Site Boundary;
 - 3) Vernatt's Drain, located approximately 128 m to the south west of the Scheme Site Boundary;
 - 4) River Glen Corridor, located approximately 344 m to the west of the Scheme Site Boundary;
 - 5) Blue Gowt Drain, North located approximately 648 m to the west of the Scheme Site Boundary;
 - 6) A16 Verges North of the River Glen, located approximately 663 m to the north west of the Scheme Site Boundary;
 - 7) Risegate Eau, located approximately 999 m to the north west of the Scheme Site Boundary;
 - 8) Pinchbeck Marsh, located approximately 1.1 km to the south west of the Scheme Site Boundary;
 - 9) Moulton Park and River, located approximately 1.4 km to the south east of the Scheme Site Boundary;
 - 10) South Bank Fosdyke, located approximately 1.4 km to the north east of the Scheme Site Boundary;
 - 11) Moulton River, located approximately 1.8 km to the north east of the Scheme Site Boundary; and
 - 12) A16 East Verge South of the River Glen, located approximately 1.9 km to the west of the Scheme Site Boundary;
- 5.2.6 Features of ecological importance have been assessed in the Planning Application and S37 Applications. Survey data that informed these assessments included UK Habitat Classification (UK Hab), Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) condition assessment data, and information on species such as great crested newt, wintering and passage birds, breeding birds, badger, bats, otter, water vole and invasive species. To date, important ecological features identified within the Scheme Site Boundary include coastal floodplain grazing marsh Habitat of Principal Importance (HPI), Schedule 1 birds, badger, foraging and commuting bats and water vole.

Potential Impacts / Effects

Section 37 Overhead Line Works

- 5.2.7 Given the proximity of the Scheme to the identified European designated sites within the study area, a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) Stage 1 (Screening) Report has been prepared. Informed by pre-application consultation with Natural England, the HRA Screening Report has considered the effects of all three components of works summarised in **Table 1.1** alone and in combination with other plans and projects. The HRA Screening Report has been submitted to inform both the S37 Applications and the Planning Application.
- 5.2.8 Habitats identified within the Section 37 Overhead Line Works Boundary are cereal crops, modified grassland, hedgerow, other standing water, other rivers and streams developed land, lowland mixed deciduous woodland and line of trees (refer to Appendix A of the Habitat Classification Survey Report). Potential construction phase impacts identified to date include habitat loss, habitat fragmentation, disturbance of species through noise, temporary lighting, construction traffic movements and increased human presence on-site, and risk of pollution.
- 5.2.9 Standard mitigation measures would be employed during the construction phase of the Scheme to avoid and/or minimise any direct or indirect impact on ecological features. These will include adherence to defined working hours, robust pollution control measures, control of temporary construction lighting and measures to minimise construction traffic movements as far as practicable. In addition, this would include protective principles for the loss of woodland during construction.
- 5.2.10 Once operational, potential impacts of the S37 Overhead Line Works alone are considered to be limited to collision risk for birds given the introduction of new sections of overhead line. It is however noted that the S37 Overhead Line Works would result in a net increase in just three pylons and that risks to birds are being considered in the context of the existing 4ZM and 2WS overhead lines, which converge at Spalding Tee-Point.
- 5.2.11 A range of ecological surveys have been completed in support of the Scheme as detailed further within the supporting survey reports listed in **Table 3.1**. Whilst a small number of targeted surveys are currently ongoing, sufficient surveys have been undertaken to inform design development and the screening of the Scheme undertaken within this report. Survey findings have also informed the management measures identified in the outline CEMP which has been submitted with the S37 Applications.

Substation Works and Exempt Overhead Line Works

Substation Works

- 5.2.12 The Substation Works would result in a greater extent of habitat loss than the S37 Overhead Line Works given the permanent footprint of the substation, which in addition to directly impacting agricultural land, would also require the permanent diversion of an existing drainage ditch. However, additional ecological mitigation measures have been included within the design of the Scheme where direct impacts upon habitats cannot be avoided in the first instance. This includes for example an area within the Scheme Site Boundary to the west of the new Weston Marsh

Substation A, to provide provision for habitat enhancement to mitigate loss of existing habitat utilised by farmland birds.

- 5.2.13 As with the S37 Overhead Line Works, construction phase impacts associated with the substation would include habitat loss, habitat fragmentation, disturbance of species through noise, temporary lighting, construction traffic movements and increased human presence on-site, and risk of pollution.
- 5.2.14 Security lighting would be required during operation of the substation. All lighting would be designed in accordance with the appropriate design standards and National Grid technical specifications. For the purposes of this report, it is assumed that the security lighting would be event activated (i.e. would not be permanently on) and would be designed to be environmentally sensitive (e.g. directional, downwards only and low light not exceeding 50 lux average). Further information regarding substation lighting design has been provided in support of the Planning Application.
- 5.2.15 An Ecological Impact Assessment has been prepared to inform the Planning Application for the Substation Works and assesses the potential effects of the substation in further detail, based upon the control measures to be outlined within the Outline CEMP.
- 5.2.16 A BNG assessment has been submitted with the Planning Application for the Substation Works by way of a BNG Technical Report which summarises the findings of the BNG Metric assessment alongside supporting figures. The ecology and landscape teams will work collaboratively with National Grid's design team to make sure that BNG is delivered for those works within the scope of the Planning Application, taking into account the BNG hierarchy.

Exempt Overhead Line Works

- 5.2.17 There is considered to be a lower risk of the Exempt Overhead Line Works resulting in adverse effects upon ecological receptors due to the existing presence of the 4ZM and 2WS overhead lines and existing maintenance access routes. These works are broadly comparable to maintenance and repair activities routinely undertaken by National Grid in accordance with best practice environmental management requirements.
- 5.2.18 In the event that vegetation or any other feature with the potential to support breeding birds is required to be removed during the main breeding bird season (01 March to 31 August) or, in the case of Schedule 1 birds (e.g. barn owl), is likely to be disturbed, then works would be undertaken in the presence of an Ecological Clerk of Works (ECoW). Appropriate protection measures would be put in place should active nests be found. These would include exclusion zones around active nests until chicks fledge or nests become inactive as determined by monitoring by the ECoW(s). Active nests of wild birds are protected at all times and therefore the same measures would be put in place if an active nest is identified at any time of year.

5.3 Landscape and Visual

Baseline

- 5.3.1 The Scheme is located in a predominantly open rural landscape surrounded by agricultural land, with the majority of construction required for the Scheme being located approximately 2.5 km north of Weston, 2.2 km east of Surfleet Seas End, and 2.3 km west of Moulton Seas End.
- 5.3.2 The Scheme Site Boundary is located within NCA 46: The Fens. At a local level, the Scheme is located within RLCT 2A Settled Fens and Marshes, as defined in the East Midlands Region Landscape Character Areas.
- 5.3.3 The Scheme Site Boundary is not within or adjacent to any National Landscapes, the closest being Norfolk Coast National Landscape over 28 km to the east. There are no Country Parks, areas of open access land or registered parks and gardens within 10 km of the Scheme Site Boundary.
- 5.3.4 The Scheme Site Boundary is located within the parishes of Weston, Surfleet and The Moultons. The closest densely populated areas are located 200 m to the south of the A151 at Weston, 1 km to the west at Surfleet Seas End and 1.4 km to the east at Moulton Seas End. However, there are isolated hamlets and agricultural holdings in closer proximity to the Scheme.
- 5.3.5 There are several Public Rights of Way (PRoW) in the vicinity of the Scheme Site Boundary, with one within the boundary between Western Barn House and Crowtree Farm. A number of PRoW follow the River Welland, including the MacMillan Way which follows the north west bank of the river east of Surfleet.

Potential Impacts / Effects

S37 Overhead Line Works

- 5.3.6 Construction activities associated with the S37 Overhead Line Works would result in temporary adverse impacts upon the RLCT 2A: Settled Fens and Marshes, due to the presence of construction compounds, construction access roads and site operatives. However, the impacts of construction would be temporary and reversible in nature, given that land required temporarily would be reinstated upon completion of construction.
- 5.3.7 The Section 37 Overhead Line Works would introduce new elements of permanent overhead line infrastructure within the landscape, specifically including seven new pylons (net increase of 3) and additional connecting transmission lines. However, the permanent impacts of this new infrastructure must be considered in the context of the existing 4ZM and 2WS overhead lines, which already influence landscape character and how it is perceived. Therefore, when assessed against the baseline, no significant effects upon landscape character are anticipated during operation due to the S37 Overhead Line Works.
- 5.3.8 Visual receptors include users of PRoW and views from residential and business properties within the surrounding area. Due to the proximity of the PRoWs to the Scheme, there is the potential for users of these PRoWs to have their views affected during construction and operation. Standard mitigation measures would be employed during the construction phase of the Scheme to avoid and/or minimise any direct or

indirect landscape and visual impacts. This may include the use of hoarding to screen construction compounds if near to properties and also the protection of existing vegetation to retain natural screening and minimise landscape effects. Control measures to be implemented during construction have been detailed further within the Outline CEMP submitted with the S37 Applications. Whilst there are likely to be effects on visual receptors during construction, these would be localised and temporary.

- 5.3.9 There would be a net increase in pylons in views, with four pylons being removed and seven being constructed, but seen in the context of the existing pylons and the existing Spalding Tee Point junction of the 2WS and 4ZM overhead lines, it is not considered likely that the resulting permanent change in views due to the Scheme would result in significant visual effects.
- 5.3.10 Further detail is provided within the Landscape and Visual Appraisal prepared in support of both the Planning Application and S37 Applications.

Substation Works and Exempt Overhead Line Works

- 5.3.11 As with the Section 37 Overhead Line Works, construction activities associated with the new Weston Marsh Substation A would result in temporary adverse impacts upon both landscape character and views. These impacts would however be temporary and reversible following demobilisation and reinstatement of land required temporarily for construction.
- 5.3.12 The presence of the substation and access road would result in permanent impacts upon landscape character and visual amenity. Over time, proposed mitigation planting would mature and provide some screening of the infrastructure and integration of the substation into the landscape. Effects upon the RLCT and upon views would be relatively localised and given the existing influence of electricity transmission infrastructure at Spalding Tee Point upon localised landscape character and visual amenity, no significant landscape and visual effects are anticipated.
- 5.3.13 All substation lighting would be designed in accordance with the appropriate design standards and National Grid technical specifications. For the purposes of this report, it is assumed that the security lighting would be event activated (i.e. would not be permanently on) and would be designed to be environmentally sensitive (e.g. directional, downwards only and low light not exceeding 50 lux average). Further details are provided in the Lighting Strategy prepared for the Planning Application.
- 5.3.14 The Landscape and Visual Appraisal submitted with the Planning Application has considered the likely effects of the Substation Works in further detail and presents the full details of associated mitigation measures. Landscape mitigation planting and BNG measures are also included within the scope of the Planning Application for the Substation Works. The LVIA has also considered how views of all components of the Scheme interact.

5.4 Traffic and Movement

Baseline

- 5.4.1 The Scheme Site Boundary is located in proximity to several key highway links, including the A16, A17 and the A151. The A16 and A17 are generally wide single carriageway roads providing north south connections and the A151 runs in an east

west direction connecting the A16 and A17 to the south of the Scheme Site Boundary. The roads are generally subject to varying speed limits typically national speed limit (60mph) in rural areas reducing to 40mph or 50mph in more built up sections. The Scheme would be accessed during construction from Stone Gate, Marsh Road and a new temporary construction haul road. During operation the Scheme will be accessed from Stone Gate and Marsh Road. Stone Gate and Marsh Road are broadly routed in a southerly direction, connecting with the A151. They are narrow single carriageways, national speed limit (60 mph) with no footways and minimal street lighting.

- 5.4.2 Recent improvement works at the A16 / A151 Springfields Roundabout have improved operation at the junction and no capacity issues are identified on the local highway network. A review of historical accident data indicates no issues in relation to highway safety on the local highway network.
- 5.4.3 A number of local bus services run through Spalding and provide access to local and regional destinations. Service 505 provides approximately two services per hour between Kings Lynn/Sutton Bridge and Spalding. Bus stops are located on the A151 and in Weston to the south of the Scheme Site Boundary.
- 5.4.4 The nearest rail station is at Spalding, which is a stop for regular services to Peterborough, Lincoln, Newark Northgate and Doncaster. Spalding Railway Station is some distance from the Scheme Site Boundary, approximately 7.5 km to the south west of the new Weston Marsh Substation A. No rail lines are crossed by the Scheme Site Boundary. The Substation Works Site Boundary and S37 Overhead Line Works Site Boundaries are located to the east of the River Welland, a navigable waterway, to the north east of Spalding.
- 5.4.5 Limited walking, wheeling and cycling infrastructure is provided in the vicinity of the Scheme Site Boundary. Intermittent pedestrian and cycle infrastructure is provided on the A151 with no infrastructure on Stone Gate or Marsh Road. A number of footpaths and bridleways run adjacent to the River Welland to the west of the Scheme Site Boundary. From the River Welland, Footpaths Wstn/8/1 and Wstn/7/1 cross the Scheme Site Boundary, broadly running in an east west direction towards Carrington Road to the east.

Potential Impacts / Effects

S37 Overhead Line Works

- 5.4.6 Potential temporary impacts are expected during construction of the Scheme with negligible impacts expected during operation. Details of construction activities, programme and forecast construction traffic are based on information provided by the Scheme Designers and Contractors and set out within the Transport Statement prepared for the Planning Application. Construction traffic forecasts are presented for the Substation Works and S37 Overhead Line Works together. Construction traffic will consist of Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) and Light Goods Vehicles (LGVs) bringing materials and equipment as well as construction workers cars/vans. HGV/LGV movements will be spread across the working day while workers cars/vans are forecast to arrive from 06:30-08:00hrs and leave from 18:00-19:30hrs. Forecast hourly flows are low and avoid the existing highway network peak hours. The impact of construction of the Scheme is not anticipated to give rise to capacity or road safety concerns and therefore is unlikely to result in impacts upon the local road network that would result in significant effects upon users.

- 5.4.7 Temporary suspension and diversion of PRow Wstn7/1 is required to enable construction of the Scheme. Following construction, the footpath route would be reinstated. Details of the proposed temporary suspension and diversion will be agreed with the LCC PRow Officer. This diversion would require an application pursuant to section 257 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. General measures would include the provision of signage to inform users of the details of the suspension and diversion route as well as the timing of the suspension and appropriate construction site contact details.
- 5.4.8 The main consideration in refining proposals will be the management of construction traffic and any works to the local road network to ensure that it would continue to operate safely for all road users. Localised road widening would be undertaken on Stone Gate, which are required on a temporary basis to facilitate the construction of the Scheme.
- 5.4.9 Furthermore, an Outline CTMP has been prepared for the Scheme and submitted in support of the S37 Applications. This sets out a framework of potential measures that could be implemented by the Contractor to minimise the traffic impact as far as reasonably practicable. A detailed CTMP would then be agreed with the Local Highway Authority prior to the commencement of construction.
- 5.4.10 During the operational phase of the Scheme, the number of vehicle movements associated with the S37 Overhead Line Works would be minimal and limited to those associated with maintenance only.

Substation Works and Exempt Overhead Line Works

- 5.4.11 The majority of construction traffic movements associated with the Scheme would be attributable to the Substation Works, particularly during the bulk earthworks and civils stages of construction. Thereafter, traffic movements generated during construction of buildings, installation of electrical equipment and landscaping are likely to be much lower than the peak.
- 5.4.12 For completeness, a Transport Statement has been prepared as part of the Planning Application and includes details of the construction traffic generation throughout the day. Forecast hourly flows are low and avoid the existing highway network peak hours. The impact of construction of the Scheme is not anticipated to give rise to capacity or road safety concerns.
- 5.4.13 In addition, an Outline CTMP provides further detail of appropriate management and mitigation measures. This will be developed in consultation with the Highways Authority and a detailed CTMP is proposed to be secured by planning condition.
- 5.4.14 Construction of the Substation Works also requires temporary closure and diversion of PRow Wstn/7/1. As previously stated, the diversion route will be agreed with the PRow Officer and would require an application pursuant to section 257 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, be clearly signed during construction and be reinstated following construction.
- 5.4.15 Whilst the Exempt Overhead Line Works interact with the River Welland, a navigable waterway, impacts upon users would be limited to temporary disruption during reconductoring works. It is anticipated that temporary overnight closures would be implemented to facilitate stringing of overhead line. National Grid will seek agreement with the relevant stakeholders prior to temporary closures. This component of works

would be unlikely result in significant effects upon waterway users as the work would be undertaken outside of peak operational times to minimise impact.

- 5.4.16 With the implementation of appropriate standard mitigation measures and traffic management, and given the scale of the Scheme, no significant traffic and movement effects are anticipated during construction.
- 5.4.17 As with the S37 Overhead Line Works, operational traffic volumes attributable to the Substation Works and Exempt Overhead Line Works would also be low and limited to maintenance vehicle trips only. Therefore, the Scheme is not likely to result in significant traffic and movement effects during operation.

5.5 Historic Environment

Baseline

- 5.5.1 A 2 km Study Area is considered proportionate to inform assessment of the potential impacts of the Scheme upon designated heritage assets. A 1 km Study Area has been adopted for non-designated heritage assets. To inform the historic baseline, reference has been made to designated entries sourced from the National Heritage List for England (NHLE) and non-designated heritage assets recorded by the Lincolnshire Historic Environment Record (LHER).
- 5.5.2 There are no World Heritage Sites, Registered Parks and Gardens or Registered Battlefields within 2 km of the Scheme Site Boundary.
- 5.5.3 There is a total of 40 designated heritage assets within 2 km of the Scheme Site Boundary. These comprise two scheduled monuments, four grade I listed buildings, 33 grade II listed buildings and one conservation area. Many of these assets are situated within the Moulton Conservation Area and the settlements of Weston and Moulton Seas End located to the south and east of the Scheme Site Boundary. Those designated assets closest to the Scheme Site Boundary are illustrated on **Figure 2**.
- 5.5.4 There are no designated heritage assets within the Scheme Site Boundary. Designated heritage assets located in close proximity to the Scheme Site Boundary are:
- 1) two designated heritage assets of high significance, the scheduled monument of Wykeham Chapel moated monastic grange constructed in the 14th century (NHLE 1019096) and the grade I listed Wykeham Chapel of St Nicholas (NHLE 1064471) which is included in the scheduled designation, located approximately 774 m to the south west of the Scheme Site Boundary. Two grade II listed assets also form part of this group, the Chapel Farmhouse (NHLE 1147513) and associated gate piers (NHLE 1064472); and
 - 2) a further two grade II listed buildings Wraggmarsh House Farmhouse (NHLE 1147603) and Pigeoncote to the south of Wraggmarsh House (NHLE 1064477) and are located approximately 1.1 km to the north east of the Scheme Site Boundary.
- 5.5.5 There is a total of 54 non-designated heritage assets identified by the LHER within 1 km of the Scheme Site Boundary. Of the non-designated heritage assets recorded by the LHER one is located within the Scheme Site Boundary comprising the earthwork and buried remains of the Medieval Sea Bank in Weston (MLI98445).

- 5.5.6 Other non-designated heritage assets recorded by the LHER located outside the Scheme Site Boundary but in close proximity to it, largely comprise post-medieval historic farmsteads, notably Crowtree Farm (MLI122916), Bottom Yard (MLI122915), Shepherds Farm (MLI122924), Welland House Farm (MLI122918), White House Farm (MLI122917), Moulton Marsh Farm (MLI123156), Chestnut House (MLI122926) and the Ship Inn (MLI87121). Assets also include the recorded locations of former farms demolished in the past including School Farm (MLI122914), Cowhirne Farm (MLI122923), Weston Marsh Farm (MLI122920), and the former tramway across Wragg Marsh (MLI22401). The find spots of two post-medieval artefact scatters (MLI85279 and MLI85278) are also recorded.
- 5.5.7 Non-intrusive geophysical surveys and analysis of aerial photographs and LiDAR data for the Scheme have identified a number of previously unknown, non-designated heritage assets within the Scheme Site Boundary. These comprise earthworks, cropmarks or geophysical anomalies representing buried archaeological remains. Archaeological features identified include medieval dyling fields, post-medieval sea defences, post-medieval field boundary ditches, undated ditches and natural watercourses. Details of the survey results have been presented in a Historic Environment Desk Based Assessment prepared to inform the EAR submitted in support of the S37 Applications.

Potential Impacts / Effects

S37 Overhead Line Works

- 5.5.8 The screening of effects includes consideration of pylon foundation works, access routes, and stringing areas associated with the S37 Overhead Line Works, which may intersect with areas of archaeological potential.
- 5.5.9 There is potential for physical impacts to buried archaeological features identified by geophysical surveys, aerial photography and LiDAR as a result of construction of the Scheme. Topsoil stripping and groundworks have the potential to truncate or partially remove post-medieval ditches, an undated ditch, post-medieval field boundary and natural watercourses with the potential to be of local or regional significance. These impacts would be offset by a programme of appropriate archaeological evaluation and mitigation measures.
- 5.5.10 There is also potential for the Scheme to encounter previously unknown archaeological and palaeoenvironmental remains, of which their date, function, extent and significance are currently not completely understood. These may have the potential to be of regional to national significance, and so any impacts to these assets (where in existence) through truncation and/or removal need to be offset through a programme of appropriate archaeological evaluation and mitigation works.
- 5.5.11 A Protocol of Archaeological Discovery (PAD) has been included as part of the Outline CEMP (applicable to all components of the Scheme). This includes procedures for the reporting, protection and management of unexpected archaeological discoveries to mitigate any potential impacts on previously unknown archaeological assets. Therefore, significant effects due to impacts upon known and previously unknown archaeological and palaeoenvironmental remains during construction are unlikely.
- 5.5.12 None of the identified designated heritage assets within the study area would incur physical impacts as a result of any element of the Scheme, although some would

experience changes to their settings during both construction and operation. However, any potential effects as a result of a net increase in pylons should be considered in the context of existing pylons associated with the 4ZM and 2WS overhead lines and the existing Spalding Tee Point. As such, significant effects due to changes in the setting of designated heritage assets attributable to the S37 Overhead Line Works are unlikely.

- 5.5.13 There is also potential for changes to the setting of non-designated heritage assets, namely the post-medieval farmsteads, during both construction and operation. Significant effects due to changes to the setting of the non-designated heritage assets are unlikely.
- 5.5.14 For completeness, the EARs submitted in support of the S37 Applications are supported by a Historic Environment Desk Based Assessment which considered the Scheme in its entirety, providing further details of the historic baseline in the study area. The EARs are further supported by the results of a geophysical survey and have set out the need for further archaeological evaluation (e.g. archaeological trial trenching) as necessary. This information will be used to design a suitable evaluation and mitigation strategy to offset any potential adverse effects the Scheme may have, as well as to better understand, and record, the archaeological resource of the area.

Substation Works and Exempt Overhead Line Works

- 5.5.15 The control measures discussed above and set out within the Outline CEMP are also applicable to the Substation Works and Exempt Overhead Line Works and are considered sufficient to avoid any significant effects due to impacts upon previously unknown archaeological and palaeoenvironmental remains.
- 5.5.16 The construction and permanent presence of the substation would introduce an additional element of built development within the landscape and would result in changes to the setting of historic assets. Setting effects due to temporary construction activities would be temporary and reversible.
- 5.5.17 Once operational, as set out within the Landscape and Visual section of this report, proposed mitigation planting would, over time, provide some screening of the infrastructure and integration of the substation into the landscape. Furthermore, given that the closest designated assets are approximately 1.6 km from the Substation Works, any permanent changes to the setting of assets as a result of the Scheme are not likely to result in significant effects.

5.6 Socio-economics, Recreation and Tourism

Baseline

- 5.6.1 The area within the Scheme Site Boundary is rural in nature and therefore socio-economic, recreation and tourism receptors are limited. There are however three local businesses (Wigwam Holidays, The Ship Inn and Flamingo Flowers Ltd) located within close proximity to the Scheme Site Boundary (<250 m) and several community facilities (including St Marys Church and Weston Post Office) within 500 m of the Scheme Site Boundary.
- 5.6.2 There are also several Public Rights of Way (PRoW) in the vicinity of the Scheme Site Boundary which are illustrated on **Figure 2**. The nearest of these are a collection of public footpaths which cross the Scheme Site Boundary from east to west (Ref

Wstn/8/1 and Wstn/7/1), as well as a bridleway (Ref Wstn/6/2) and a Byway Open to All Traffic (BOAT) (Ref Surf/3/2). The Macmillan Way long-distance walking route also intersects the Scheme Site Boundary.

- 5.6.3 There is an open space receptor within 50 m of the Scheme Site Boundary, comprising a Tennis Court located along Weston Footpath 8/1. In addition, the eastern edge of the Lingarden Employment Site (WE001) falls partially within the Scheme Site Boundary.

Potential Impacts / Effects

S37 Overhead Line Works

- 5.6.4 When considering the Scheme in its entirety, inclusive of the S37 Overhead Line Works, positive, temporary effects (direct and indirect) would likely be generated through employment opportunities within the construction supply chain, logistics and delivery of construction works on-site, with potential for further positive direct and indirect effects for local businesses (including those not within the supply chain or construction trade) during construction.
- 5.6.5 There is potential for negative temporary effects upon the amenity (due to in-combination air quality, dust, noise and vibration, visual and traffic and movement impacts) on receptors located within close proximity to the Scheme. However, based upon the implementation of control measures outlined within this report and as detailed further within the Outline CEMP, impacts on local businesses, community facilities, areas of open space, PRow and other promoted recreational routes are not anticipated result in significant effects during construction. It is also anticipated that access to receptors would be retained at all times during the construction phase.
- 5.6.6 The Lingarden Employment Site (WE001) lies partially within the Scheme Site Boundary, and construction activities have the potential to give rise to temporary adverse impacts alongside minor permanent loss of land at the edge of the allocation. However, only a small proportion of the site would be affected at its eastern boundary. As such, the works would not compromise the overall viability of the site and access is assumed to be maintained throughout. Impacts are therefore considered to be low and not significant.
- 5.6.7 Once operational, the permanent impacts of the S37 Overhead Line Works should be considered in the context of the existing overhead line infrastructure in the locality of Spalding Tee Point. In this context, it is not considered likely that there would be any associated significant effects upon socio-economic, recreation and tourism receptors.

Substation Works and Exempt Overhead Line Works

- 5.6.8 The Substation Works component of the Scheme would result in large scale construction activities in the locality of the existing Wigwam Holidays site, which is approximately 600 m from the proposed substation boundary. As discussed elsewhere within this report, whilst temporary adverse impacts associated with substation construction are likely, including visual intrusion, noise and vibration and generation of dust, no significant effects are anticipated in relation to these temporary impacts when considered in isolation. Similarly, based upon the identified control measures, including measures specific to the Wigwam Holidays facility whereby, where practicable and subject to agreement with the landowner, construction works in proximity to the site would be undertaken outside of peak season to minimise

disturbance to users, significant in-combination effects upon the amenity of socio-economic, recreation and tourism receptors are considered unlikely as a result of the Scheme.

- 5.6.9 As discussed within the landscape and visual section, over time, proposed mitigation planting would mature and provide some screening of the infrastructure and integration of the substation into the landscape. When considered together with the low risk of adverse air quality, noise and vibration and traffic and movements effects during operation, it is concluded that significant in-combination effects upon the amenity of socio-economic, recreation and tourism receptors during operation are unlikely.

5.7 Air Quality

Baseline

- 5.7.1 The area surrounding the Scheme is predominantly rural in nature, with land mostly used for agriculture. The settlement of Moulton Seas End is located to the east of the Scheme and Weston is situated to the south. The assessed sensitive human receptor locations across the Study Area are either at the extents of these and other small settlements, closest to the Scheme Site Boundary, or represent individual scattered properties within the wider rural area. These properties include those located in several small hamlets and individual agricultural holdings.
- 5.7.2 There are three designated ecological sites identified within the baseline Air Quality Study Area which are potentially sensitive to construction dust effects: Surfleet Bank Local Wildlife Site, to the north, and Vernatt's Drain and Surfleet Seas End Saltmarsh Local Wildlife Sites, to the west of the Scheme. Figure 2 in the supporting Air Quality Assessment (see **Table 3.1**) demonstrates the sensitive human and ecological receptors in the Air Quality Study Area.
- 5.7.3 There are no Air Quality Management Areas within 2 km of the Scheme. Monitoring of annual mean nitrogen (NO₂) levels is undertaken by SHDC using a network of passive diffusion tubes and automatic monitoring stations and is reported in the SHDC 2025 Annual Status Report (Ref 8). The closest diffusion tube monitoring location to the Scheme is located approximately 1.9 km west, in Surfleet Seas End. Monitoring indicates an overall trend of decreasing concentrations in recent monitoring years (2022 to 2024), with no recent exceedances of the Air Quality Objective (AQO) seen at this monitoring location or across the wider SHDC administrative area. SHDC also undertakes monitoring of particulate matter (PM₁₀) at two locations, including one within Spalding. This is considered representative of the conditions within the study area due to its proximity and shows a similar trend to those seen in the NO₂ data. There have been no exceedances of the AQO for PM₁₀ between 2020 and 2024. SHDC does not undertake monitoring of PM_{2.5}.

Potential Impacts / Effects

S37 Overhead Line Works

- 5.7.4 Construction activities associated with the S37 Overhead Line Works, including the establishment of access routes and operation of construction compounds, have the potential to generate dust and PM₁₀ (including PM_{2.5}). However, based upon the

relevant best practice assessment guidance (Institute of Air Quality Management (IAQM) 'Guidance on the assessment of dust from demolition and construction' (Ref 9)), through good site practice and the implementation of appropriate control mitigation measures set out within the Outline CEMP, the residual effects of the construction phase on air quality are judged to be not significant.

5.7.5 Additional road traffic movements of light and heavy duty vehicles associated with the construction works are not anticipated to be large enough to result in changes in air pollutant (NO₂, PM₁₀ or PM_{2.5}) concentrations at road side receptors that would result in significant air quality effects. Any changes in air quality during construction would also be temporary and reversible.

5.7.6 An Outline CEMP and Outline CTMP (considering the Scheme in its entirety) have been submitted with the S37 Applications, with a final version to be submitted to the relevant authority for approval prior to commencement of development. The Outline CEMP includes control measures to be adopted to minimise dust generation and emissions during construction. The good practice measures that would be implemented to minimise these impacts during construction include, but are not limited to:

- 1) Low and zero emission vehicles and non-road mobile machinery (NRMM) will be used where possible for site use;
- 2) Preparation and management of the site ensuring that machinery and dust causing activities are located as far as possible away from receptors;
- 3) Vehicles or plant will not be left idling unnecessarily;
- 4) All vehicles, plant and NRMM will be regularly inspected, serviced and maintained; and
- 5) Additional measures relevant to the Scheme as recommended in the IAQM 'Guidance on the assessment of dust from demolition and construction' (Ref 9) will be implemented.

5.7.7 The Outline CTMP sets out a framework of potential measures to be implemented by the contractor to minimise the traffic impacts (and associated emissions) as far as is practicable.

5.7.8 As previously set out within the Traffic and Movement section of this report, during the operational phase of the Scheme, the number of vehicle movements associated with the S37 Overhead Line Works would be minimal and limited to those associated with maintenance only. Therefore, operational impacts upon air quality are likely to be negligible.

Substation Works and Exempt Overhead Line Works

5.7.9 Throughout construction, there would be a risk of dust impacts during completion of the bulk earthworks and civils stages of construction of the new Weston Marsh Substation A, and from vehicle track out. However, the management measures specified within the Outline CEMP have been informed by a construction dust risk assessment of potential impacts, to ensure they are adequate to control these to a level that would not result in significant effects.

5.7.10 Similarly, the peak construction traffic movements during construction would also be associated with the bulk earthworks and civils stages of construction of the substation. Notwithstanding this, as set out previously, following the implementation

of appropriate traffic management measures and given the anticipated overall volume of construction traffic attributable to the Scheme, it is not anticipated that emissions would result in significant effects upon air quality.

- 5.7.11 As with the S37 Overhead Line Works, it is not anticipated that operation of the Substation Works or Exempt Overhead Line Works would result in any significant air quality effects at sensitive receptors, due to the low projected vehicle movements during operation of the Scheme.

5.8 Geology and Hydrogeology

Baseline

- 5.8.1 The Study Area is almost entirely underlain by mudstone of the Oxford Clay Formation (mudstone) and superficial deposits comprising Tidal Flat deposits (clay and silt). The superficial deposits (Tidal Flat deposits) and solid strata (mudstone of the Oxford Clay Formation) across the Scheme Site Boundary are designated as Unproductive Strata, defined as strata that are largely unable to provide usable water supplies and are unlikely to have surface water and wetland ecosystems dependent on them. There are no recorded groundwater abstractions within 500m of the Scheme Site Boundary.
- 5.8.2 The Scheme will not involve ground disturbance at recorded historical landfills or areas that are recorded by the British Geological Survey to be underlain by artificial ground.
- 5.8.3 The Scheme Site Boundary is not located within the proximity of a Mineral Safeguarding Area (MSA).

Potential Impacts / Effects

S37 Overhead Line Works

- 5.8.4 The risk of encountering ground contamination is considered to be low. A programme of Ground Investigation is underway and will be completed prior to construction for geotechnical and design purposes.
- 5.8.5 The Outline CEMP submitted with the S37 Applications, includes guidance as to what action should be taken should any soils with visual or olfactory evidence of contamination be encountered during the construction works (e.g. material to be appropriately tested and disposed of).
- 5.8.6 The Scheme in its entirety is in a low sensitivity hydrogeological setting. The nature of the Scheme is such that it would not be anticipated to present a risk to groundwater quality or quantity. The Outline CEMP includes appropriate standard mitigation measures to ensure protection of groundwater from construction activities.
- 5.8.7 Given the nature, scale and location of the Scheme, and with the implementation of appropriate standard mitigation measures included within the Outline CEMP, no significant effects relating to ground conditions or hydrogeology are anticipated. No likely significant effects for minerals are predicted as a result of the Scheme.

Substation Works and Exempt Overhead Line Works

- 5.8.8 Whilst intrusive works, including topsoil stripping, installation of temporary drainage and bulk earthworks, would primarily be associated with the Substation Works, consideration of this component of works alongside the S37 Overhead Line Works and Exempt Overhead Line works does not alter the conclusions set out above. Due to the low sensitivity of the receiving environment and the control measures set out within the Outline CEMP, the Scheme in its entirety is not anticipated to result in significant effects relating to ground conditions or hydrogeology.
- 5.8.9 It is noted for completeness that the Exempt Overhead Line Works are not anticipated to require significant ground disturbance or the introduction of new source-receptor-effect pathways, given proposed works are limited to reconductoring of the existing 4ZM line. Whilst temporary pylons would be required during construction, these would be removed and ground reinstated upon completion of the reconductoring works.

5.9 Water Resources and Flood Risk

Baseline

- 5.9.1 There are several surface watercourses in the vicinity of the Scheme Site Boundary, ranging from main rivers such as the River Welland, to small ditches. They all fall within the Water Framework Directive Welland Lower Operational Catchment.
- 5.9.2 The proposed substation location lies across the route of an existing drain within the Lord's South Internal Drainage Board (IDB) catchment. This is an IDB ordinary watercourse referenced as DRN208P1101.
- 5.9.3 The Environment Agency Flood Map for Planning shows that the majority of the Scheme Site Boundary is located in Flood Zone 3, with small areas in Flood Zone 2 and a very small area around Crowtree Farm in Flood Zone 1. The area is therefore susceptible to flooding and flood defences exist along both banks of the River Welland.
- 5.9.4 The Scheme Site Boundary is located approximately 6 km upstream from The Wash SPA, Ramsar and SSSI and The Wash and North Norfolk Coast SAC.

Potential Impacts / Effects

S37 Overhead Line Works

- 5.9.5 During the construction phase, construction works associated with the S37 Overhead Line Works could potentially impact water quality and water resource receptors, through increased water supply and demand requirements, the potential to generate sediment laden runoff, changes to hydromorphology and spillage of pollutants.
- 5.9.6 There could also be potential impacts on flood risk and land drainage through changes to surface water flood risk and changes to watercourse and floodplain flow conveyance, due to the presence of temporary construction works within the floodplain and the requirement for temporary watercourse crossing associated with access routes. However, risks specifically attributable to the S37 Overhead Line Works are limited, given the extent of these works and a net increase of only three additional pylons. It is also noted that the proposed infrastructure is located within an

area of defended floodplain. Therefore, under normal conditions, there would be no effect on floodplain storage and conveyance arising from the presence of temporary construction works.

- 5.9.7 During the construction phase, the works would be undertaken using standard impact avoidance measures to protect groundwater and surface water resources. The Outline CEMP sets out full details of how ground and surface water resources would be protected during the construction phase. Measures include robust pollution prevention, control of run-off across the site, wash down of vehicles and plant within designated areas, application of stand-off distances from watercourses (where practicable) and appropriate design of temporary crossings to maintain conveyance. With the inclusion of such standard impact avoidance measures, temporary impacts that could adversely affect water resources are not likely to result in significant effects.
- 5.9.8 During operation, significant effects upon water resources and flood risk due to the S37 Overhead Line Works are unlikely. New lattice pylons to be used in the Scheme minimally obstruct water flow and do not significantly affect floodplain storage or conveyance. Furthermore, pylons are resilient to water damage from occasional flooding, and the conductors are located sufficiently above the highest flood level conceivable over the lifetime of the Scheme, ensuring that they will remain operational during a flood event and will not pose a safety risk.

Substation Works and Exempt Overhead Line Works

- 5.9.9 The construction of the new Weston Marsh Substation A would result in the large element of new build infrastructure within the defended floodplain.
- 5.9.10 As set out in relation to the S37 Overhead Line Works, the potential for loss of the floodplain and changes in floodplain flow conveyance due to temporary construction works would be managed through embedded control measures set out within the Outline CEMP.
- 5.9.11 A Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) has been completed for the Scheme and submitted in support of the Planning Application. This was supported by the outputs of hydraulic modelling which was informed by engagement with the Environment Agency.
- 5.9.12 The flood protection measures for the substation have been designed in accordance with National Grid's internal guidance on substation flood resilience and are consistent with planning policy requirements.
- 5.9.13 Proposed surface water drainage systems will provide attenuation of runoff from impermeable surfaces to greenfield rates and incorporate appropriate pollution prevention measures and the use of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) as far as practicable. A Surface Water Drainage Strategy was submitted with the Planning Application.
- 5.9.14 The watercourse diversion required will be designed to provide an equivalent conveyance capacity to the existing watercourses and will incorporate morphological features to promote aquatic biodiversity to a level that is consistent with maintaining effective land drainage. Culverting will be avoided as far as practicable.
- 5.9.15 When considering the Scheme in its entirety, based upon the identified embedded design measures and control measures planned to be in place during construction, significant effects on water resources and flood risk receptors are not predicted to be significant during either construction or operation.

5.10 Noise and Vibration

Baseline

- 5.10.1 The area surrounding the Scheme is predominantly rural in nature, with land mostly used for agriculture. However, there are sensitive receptors present at the extents of the nearby settlements, as well as several small hamlets and agricultural holdings.
- 5.10.2 The baseline noise environment is expected to vary within the Scheme Site Boundary depending on the nature of the area. For example, close to noise sources, such as roads and in built up areas, ambient noise levels are expected to be higher. Further away from roads and in rural areas which cover most of the Scheme Site Boundary, ambient and background noise levels would be expected to be lower.

Potential Impacts / Effects

Section 37 Overhead Line Works

- 5.10.3 Construction of the S37 Overhead Line Works would generate noise and vibration. However, with the exception of foundation works for the proposed new pylons, which may necessitate percussive piling, associated activities have limited potential to result in significant effects.
- 5.10.4 A range of good site practice measures would also be adopted during construction to manage potential noise impacts. This is specified within the Outline CEMP which has been submitted with the S37 Applications. Measures will include, but not be limited to, the following:
- 1) Best practice working methods in accordance with the 'Considerate Constructors Scheme' to reduce the potential annoyance to receptors in close proximity to the Proposed Development;
 - 2) All plant used on Site will comply with the EC Directive on Noise Emissions for Outdoor Equipment, where applicable;
 - 3) All plant used on Site will be regularly maintained, paying particular attention to the integrity of silencers and acoustic enclosures;
 - 4) Adherence to the codes of practice for construction given in British Standard (BS) 5228 and the guidance given therein for minimising noise and vibration emissions from the Site;
 - 5) Compliance with specified construction working hours; and
 - 6) Local residents will be kept informed and provided with a contact name and number for any queries or complaints.
- 5.10.5 At all Noise Sensitive Receptor locations, it is predicted that construction noise impacts would be reduced to levels which would not result in significant noise effects, through the application of Best Practicable Means (BPM) specified within the Outline CEMP.
- 5.10.6 Additional road traffic movements of light and heavy duty vehicles associated with the construction works are not anticipated to be large enough to generate a perceptible change in noise at any roadside ecological and residential receptors.

- 5.10.7 In terms of operational noise, based upon the low noise conductor system proposed to be utilise for both the S37 Overhead Line works and the Exempt Overhead Line Works, noise associated with the operation of permanent overhead line infrastructure is not likely to result in significant effects during operation.

Substation Works and Exempt Overhead Line Works

- 5.10.8 The scale of construction activities associated with the Substation Works would be greater than that associated with either the S37 Overhead Line Works or Exempt Overhead Line Works. This includes bulk earthworks and civils stages to establish the substation foundations/apron. Notwithstanding the greater scale of these works relative to the wider components, when considering the Scheme in its entirety, it remains the case construction noise impacts would be reduced to levels which would not result in significant noise effects, through the application of Best Practicable Means (BPM) specified within the Outline CEMP.
- 5.10.9 It is not anticipated that there is potential for significant noise and vibration effects associated with the operation of the new Weston Marsh Substation A given that noise generating equipment (such as transformers) are not proposed within the new Weston Marsh Substation A.

5.11 Agriculture and Soils

Baseline

- 5.11.1 The Scheme lies within an area of land mapped as Provisional Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) Grade 1 (Excellent). ALC Grades 1, 2 and 3a are considered Best and Most Versatile (BMV) land and Grade 1 land is considered to be of very high sensitivity. Detailed ALC surveys (presented in the Agricultural Land Classification Report) undertaken have confirmed the predominance of Grade 1 agricultural land within the Scheme Site Boundary (97.1 % with the remaining 2.9 % comprising non-agricultural land).
- 5.11.2 Lincolnshire County is mapped as comprising 94.5 % BMV land. Given the abundance of BMV land within the County and the extent of Provisional Grade 1 land at and around the Scheme, the options for the preferential use of lower grade land are very limited.
- 5.11.3 The soils within the Scheme Site Boundary are mapped as comprising the Wisbech Association. These soils are described as stoneless, seasonally wet, deep silty soils, overlaying marine alluvium geology. Soils in this Association are categorised as having a high sensitivity and having a low resilience to structural damage in relation to soil handling. The ALC survey confirmed the soils to be stoneless deep light silt over medium/heavy silt in places and so confirmed they are characteristic of the Wisbech Association.

Potential Impacts / Effects

S37 Overhead Line Works

- 5.11.4 The S37 Overhead Line Works would result in the permanent loss of up to 0.04 ha of land mapped as ALC Grade 1 land and the associated soils (and thus the soil ecosystem services) for the siting of seven new pylons (assuming a 10 x 10m

footprint). This figure assumes land within the footprint of three of the existing pylons to be removed would be reinstated to agricultural use (noting one removed pylon is not situated on agricultural land and could not be reasonably reinstated). Where practicable, all surplus soil resources would be re-used within the project where, depending on the proposed land use, some soil ecosystem services would be retained, restored, or potentially enhanced. The majority of the land within the pylon footprint could continue to be grazed where grassland is the land use.

- 5.11.5 There would also be temporary disturbance of Grade 1 land for the dismantling of existing pylons and the installation of new overhead lines. All land required temporarily would be reinstated to its preconstruction condition and function in accordance with the requirements of the Outline Soil Management Plan which is included as part of the Outline CEMP submitted with the S37 Applications.
- 5.11.6 EARs have also been submitted as part of the S37 Applications which consider potential impacts and effects of the S37 Overhead Line Works on agriculture and soils.

Substation Works and Exempt Overhead Line Works

- 5.11.7 The new Weston Marsh Substation A compound and associated permanent operational access road would result in the permanent loss of approximately 19.69 ha of land mapped as ALC Grade 1 (BMV) land and the associated soils (belonging to the Wisbech Association). No permanent loss of BMV land is likely as a result of the Exempt Overhead Line Works.
- 5.11.8 When considered together, the combined permanent loss of approximately 19.73 ha of Grade 1 land would represent a moderate magnitude impact on a very high sensitivity receptor, based upon the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA)³ assessment guidance (Ref 10). Based upon the IEMA guidance, the permanent loss of land due to the Scheme would therefore result in a significant effect in terms of impacts on BMV land and soil function.
- 5.11.9 Appropriate mitigations have been detailed as part of the soil handling methodologies included within the Outline Soil Management Plan forming an appendix to the Outline CEMP submitted with the S37 Applications.
- 5.11.10 Impacts upon agricultural land were previously considered by SHDC in reaching a negative EIA Screening Opinion in relation to the Scheme. As noted in the SHDC Screening Opinion, in reaching a negative screening opinion (EIA not required) this does not indicate that the Scheme will not have an adverse impact on the receiving environment, in this case the permanent loss of approximately 19.73 ha of BMV agricultural land. Rather, it constitutes an opinion that any impact is unlikely to be significant in terms of the criteria outlined in Schedule 3 of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations and by extension Schedule 3 of the EIA Regulations, which contain criteria in equivalent terms.
- 5.11.11 In this context, Schedule 3 criteria includes consideration of the relative abundance, availability and quality of natural resources (including soil and land) in the area. As identified in relation to the baseline receiving environment, Lincolnshire County is mapped as comprising 94.5 % BMV land.

³ The Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA) has recently rebranded to the Institute of Sustainability and Environmental Professionals (ISEP).

- 5.11.12 With respect to the Scheme Site Boundary as a whole, land use is predominantly arable with small sections of woodland and grassland. Given this predominant land use, land holdings as a receptor are considered to have a low sensitivity. Land required temporarily would be reinstated to its pre-construction condition and impacts on individual agricultural businesses would be dealt with through financial compensation in accordance with the compensation code (which would include consideration of any active agri-environment and/or forestry/woodland schemes).
- 5.11.13 There is a small strip of woodland running north-south to the west of pylon 4ZM406 (part of the Exempt Overhead Line Works) which is under a Woodland Grant Scheme 3 agreement. It is proposed that the overhead line currently running through this woodland would be reconducted, which would likely require some temporary vegetation management of this woodland strip during construction but would not lead to significant effects.
- 5.11.14 As such, it is not considered there would be significant effects on agricultural landholdings, however affected landowners will be further consulted to ensure impacts are reduced as far as practicable.

5.12 Waste Management

- 5.12.1 During the Scheme construction phase, any waste material generated would be managed in accordance with good site practices and applicable national legislation (i.e. the waste permitting regime). The Outline CEMP (considering the Scheme in its entirety) submitted with the S37 Applications and Planning Application includes measures to mitigate and appropriately manage waste. Additionally, subject to the findings of Ground Investigation, materials excavated during the earthworks stage will be beneficially re-used within the development as far as reasonably practicable.
- 5.12.2 During the operational phase, no significant volumes of waste are anticipated to be generated.
- 5.12.3 Given the nature, scale, and location of the Scheme, and with the implementation of appropriate standard mitigation measures included in the Outline CEMP, no significant effects due to waste are anticipated.

5.13 Climate Change

- 5.13.1 The effect of the Scheme on climate change and the ability for climate change to impact upon any identified effects as a result of the Scheme are considered to be limited. Greenhouse gas emissions during construction or operation of the Scheme are considered to be limited due to the scale and nature of the proposals.
- 5.13.2 There is the potential for flooding to be exacerbated in the area due to the effects of climate change. However future climate change scenarios have been considered within the FRA submitted in support of the Planning Application and S37 Applications. With respect to the S37 Overhead Line Works, new pylons are resilient to a potential flood event due to a breach or overtopping scenario. Subsequent inspections would also be undertaken were this to occur. The conductors would be located above any maximum modelling levels during the breach scenarios considered within the FRA.
- 5.13.3 In the absence of the Scheme, there would potentially be delays to decarbonising the electricity sector. Although it is not feasible to quantify accurately, the constraints on

the transmission network are increasing as electricity demand continues to rise and increasing levels of electricity generation are provided by renewable energy sources; this factor is essential to consider. The Scheme will provide an increase in network capacity in shorter timescales by expediting a connection point for the Outer Dowsing project ahead of the Grimsby to Walpole Project.

5.14 Major Accidents and Disasters

- 5.14.1 The risk of accidents occurring during the construction or operation of the Scheme is considered to be low due to the scale and nature of the Scheme as well as National Grid's extensive experience in delivering and operating similar developments.
- 5.14.2 The Scheme would be designed, constructed and operated in accordance with all relevant health and safety legislation. The construction will adhere to best practice measures as detailed in the Outline CEMP (considering the Scheme in its entirety) submitted as part of the S37 Applications and Planning Application.
- 5.14.3 The Scheme would also comply with design safety standards including the National Electricity Transmission System Security and Quality Supply Standard (NETS SQSS), which defines the criteria and methodology for coordinating and operating the National Electricity Transmission System.

5.15 Cumulative Effects

- 5.15.1 Cumulative effects occur when the environmental impacts of a proposed development interact with those associated with other planned projects and developments located within a given geographical scope, resulting in greater effects on environmental receptors than when considered in isolation. In reaching a screening decision, the EIA Regulations require consideration of "*the cumulation of effects with other existing and approved developments*".
- 5.15.2 A review of the potential for cumulative effects as a result of the Scheme was undertaken when this report was originally prepared for the purposes of engagement with statutory environmental bodies, in November 2025. A full review of potential cumulative effects has not been undertaken in this document given that a detailed assessment of cumulative effects can be found in the **Cumulative Effects Assessment** accompanying the Section 37 applications. The following text has been updated to reflect any updated information that has become available since this report was originally prepared.

Committed Development

- 5.15.3 A review of the SHDC Planning Portal data has been undertaken to identify any developments with approved planning permission which could be constructed concurrently with the Scheme or result in cumulative operational effects. This search has considered a 10km search area from the centre of the Scheme Site Boundary.
- 5.15.4 One committed development with the potential to cause cumulative effects has been identified on the SHDC planning portal, within 2 km of the Scheme Site Boundary:
 - i. H22-1011-23 – Erection of two new industrial units.
- 5.15.5 This application was consented in January 2024. Information regarding the construction is not available. Should construction be undertaken concurrently with the

Scheme, given the small-scale nature of the consented scheme and its distance from the location of permanent elements of the Scheme (approximately 2.8 km south west of pylon 2WS014), significant cumulative effects are considered unlikely.

- 5.15.6 In addition, five policy allocations for housing, situated approximately 2 – 3 km away from the Scheme, have been identified in the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan. No details on developments being brought forward on these allocations are currently known. Given the lack of further information and the distance of the allocations from the Scheme, significant effects are currently not anticipated, however, this will be kept under review and considered in the documentation supporting the Planning Application and S37 Applications.

Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects

- 5.15.7 There are a number of Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIP) within the Planning Inspectorate's Programme. Development Consent for the Outer Dowsing Offshore Wind Farm DCO was granted on 10 February 2026. Given the relationship between the Scheme and Outer Dowsing, (as set out in Section 2) this development has been considered below.
- 5.15.8 The Meridian Solar Farm DCO was submitted in advance of the Planning Application and S37 Applications for the Scheme on 20 March 2026 and is currently within the pre-examination stage.
- 5.15.9 No other NSIPs relevant to the consideration of potential cumulative effects have been identified which are likely to be approved or awaiting a decision in advance of the S37 Applications or Planning Application. It is however acknowledged that there are a number of proposed NSIPs within the Weston Marsh area, including those for which National Grid is the Promotor. These include the following:
- 1) Eastern Green Link 3 and 4;
 - 2) Grimsby to Walpole;
 - 3) Weston Marsh to East Leicestershire project; and
 - 4) Ossian Transmission Infrastructure.
- 5.15.10 The listed NSIP projects must consider potential inter-project cumulative effects within their ES, in accordance with Planning Inspectorate Guidance (Ref 11). Where likely significant inter-project effects are identified, any required mitigation will be brought forward as part of these DCO applications. As such, the Planning Inspectorate will, in due course, consider the potential cumulative effects of these developments acting in combination with the Scheme during the DCO examination process.
- 5.15.11 In accordance with the EIA Regulations, as these developments are not yet consented, it is not a requirement to consider the cumulation of the effects of these projects alongside those of the Scheme. Notwithstanding this, discussion is included below based upon currently available information regarding the likely environmental effects of these projects. National Grid will continue to adopt a collaborative approach and aim to minimise potential cumulative effects associated with planned future DCO applications as far as reasonably practicable.

Outer Dowsing Offshore Wind Farm

- 5.15.12 Construction of this development is currently anticipated to commence in 2027 and would therefore overlap with construction of the Scheme. The elements of Outer Dowsing which interface with the Scheme are located to the north and primarily include a section of new underground transmission cable, from a new Outer Dowsing substation approximately 1.3 km north of the River Welland, to Weston Marsh Substation A. This underground cable route includes a trenchless crossing of the River Welland approximately 400 m east of the existing 4ZM overhead line river crossing. The route of the underground cable then continues south of the River Welland to connect with the Substation Works component of the Scheme.
- 5.15.13 Due to the fact that the permanent elements of Outer Dowsing which interface with the Scheme consist of an underground cable, there would be no likely significant cumulative effects during the operational phase. The Outer Dowsing substation is approximately 2.7 km from the proposed Weston Marsh Substation A, and land required temporarily for Outer Dowsing and along the cable route will be reinstated upon the completion of construction.
- 5.15.14 Given the potential impacts identified within this report the topics considered most relevant to the consideration of potential cumulative effects due to construction activities are Ecology and Biodiversity, Landscape and Visual Amenity, Traffic and Movement, Historic Environment and Agriculture and Soils.
- 5.15.15 Other potential interactions with topics such as air quality, noise and vibration during construction are anticipated to be short term, temporary and reversible and would be adequately managed via measures specified within the management plans submitted as part of the respective applications, including those set out within the Outline CEMP for the Scheme.

Ecology and Biodiversity

- 5.15.16 Outer Dowsing will result in impacts upon habitats within the Weston Marsh area, where vegetation clearance is required during construction along the underground cable route. However as reported within Chapter 21 of the Outer Dowsing ES (Ref 12), the project is not predicted to result in any significant effects upon ecology when considered in isolation or cumulatively alongside those other developments considered. This conclusion is based upon reinstatement of affected habitats and the control measures set out within the Outer Dowsing ES.
- 5.15.17 The Scheme is not likely to result in significant cumulative effects upon ecology and biodiversity when considered in combination with Outer Dowsing. As set out in Section 5.2, the Scheme, as with the interfacing elements of Outer Dowsing, is located primarily within cropland which is of negligible ecological importance. Impacts upon terrestrial habitats would be relatively localised and the outlined control measures and additional mitigation are included in the Scheme proposals to avoid significant effects during the construction phase.
- 5.15.18 Given that a trenchless methodology is proposed to facilitate the underground cable crossing of the River Welland and based upon the management measures identified in both the Outer Dowsing ES and summarised within this report, significant cumulative effects upon aquatic receptors are unlikely.

Agriculture and Soils

- 5.15.19 Both Outer Dowsing and the Scheme would result in the permanent and temporary loss of soil resources during the construction phases of the respective developments. As reported within Chapter 25 of the Outer Dowsing ES (Ref 13), the effect of the project has been assessed as major adverse and therefore significant in isolation.
- 5.15.20 Due to the widespread availability of BMV land within the Lincolnshire County, the relatively small area of land required permanently for the Scheme and adherence to soils management plans submitted as part of the respective applications, there are not likely to be additional significant cumulative effects as a result of the Scheme.
- 5.15.21 This is further supported by a BMV Quantitative Cumulative Assessment submitted in Deadline 4 of the Outer Dowsing DCO examination (Ref 14), which concluded no additional significant cumulative effects at a regional or national scale when quantifying the cumulative loss as a result of 22 NSIPs in the East Midlands Region.

Traffic and Movement

- 5.15.22 Given the temporal overlap and proximity of the Scheme to the onshore cable for the Outer Dowsing DCO, construction traffic generated for the two developments has the potential to exacerbate the respective effects upon traffic and movement of the two developments in isolation.
- 5.15.23 However, the majority of construction traffic routes associated with Outer Dowsing are north of the River Welland (Ref 15). There is a single access point that would directly interface with the Scheme (AC-49/50 Marsh Road). This is however planned to be accessed by Outer Dowsing from the east via the A17 and a local access road parallel to the River Welland. Therefore, Outer Dowsing construction traffic is not planned to utilise the same sections of Marsh Road and Stone Gate as the Scheme. The Outer Dowsing ES also indicates that the A151 will not be utilised by construction traffic.
- 5.15.24 Based upon the information presented in the Outer Dowsing ES, anticipated average two way construction traffic flows⁴ on the A17 (south of the River Welland), A16 (south of the A17) and Marsh Road are anticipated to be 77/59, 187/48 and 16/11 respectively as a result of Outer Dowsing in isolation (Ref 15). As stated above, the detailed construction programme for the Scheme is yet to be defined, equivalent construction traffic information has been set out within EARs submitted in support of the S37 Applications and a Transport Statement in support of the Planning Application.
- 5.15.25 Though projected construction traffic associated with the Scheme is yet to be finalised, due to the average volume of movements associated with Outer Dowsing on the A17 and A16, significant cumulative effects are unlikely. Construction movements associated with the Scheme are anticipated to be relatively low based on National Grid's experience of developing projects of a similar nature and scale. In addition, the impacts of both developments would be managed via implementation of CTMPs and National Grid will liaise with Outer Dowsing to optimise construction phasing and traffic routing, to minimise the volume of cumulative traffic on individual highway links as far as reasonably practicable.

⁴ Total traffic/HGVs

Landscape and Visual

- 5.15.26 Temporary construction activities associated with Outer Dowsing would result in landscape and visual impacts due to the presence of construction plant, temporary works and operatives in the locality of the River Welland. Effects are reported within Chapter 28 of the Outer Dowsing ES (Ref 16) in relation to the 'Weston Marsh Local Landscape Character Area' (LLCA) and 'Surfleet and Gosberton Marsh' LLCA.
- 5.15.27 The Outer Dowsing ES assesses the effects of the project in isolation as not significant during construction. The temporary adverse landscape and visual impacts of Outer Dowsing during construction may act in combination with those of the Scheme. However due to the relatively localised nature of the Outer Dowsing works to the east of the existing 4ZM overhead line, existing screening vegetation to be retained, assumed management measures and the temporary and reversible nature of Outer Dowsing impacts, significant cumulative effects upon landscape character and visual amenity as a result of the construction phase are considered unlikely.
- 5.15.28 Additional cumulative effects upon the Surfleet and Gosberton Marsh LLCA are unlikely as works associated with the Scheme in this area are limited to the Exempt Overhead Line Works, which would consist of re-conductoring of a short section of existing overhead line north of the River Welland.

Historic Environment

- 5.15.29 As identified on **Figure 2**, designated historic environment assets in the study area include two grade II listed assets associated with Wraggmarsh House Farm, which are located approximately 700m east of the Outer Dowsing underground cable route.
- 5.15.30 The in-direct temporary effects of Outer Dowsing upon these receptors, in isolation, are reported in Chapter 20 of the ES (Ref 17). These minor adverse effects are not significant.
- 5.15.31 It is not likely that the Scheme would result in either temporary or permanent significant cumulative effects upon the setting of these assets when considered in combination with Outer Dowsing. Permanent elements of the Scheme would be further set back from the Outer Dowsing underground cable route and must be considered in the context of the existing 2WS and 4ZM overhead lines which influence the wider setting of these assets in the current baseline. As with the Scheme in isolation, potential cumulative effects upon previously unknown archaeological and palaeoenvironmental remains would be managed via a PAD.

Summary

- 5.15.32 Significant cumulative effects due to the Scheme acting in combination with Outer Dowsing are considered unlikely. The management and mitigation measures outlined within this report and the Outline CEMP are considered sufficient to ensure the impacts of the Scheme would not be of a scale that would result in additional or materially different likely significant effects to those reported within the Outer Dowsing ES, or discussed within Sections 5.2-5.14 of this report.

Meridian Solar Farm

- 5.15.33 At the time of writing, the Meridian Solar Farm project is currently in its pre-examination phase, with an Environmental Statement (ES) submitted in support of this application made in March 2026. It is anticipated construction of the Scheme

could overlap with that of the Meridian Solar Farm, given that construction of this project is anticipated to commence in 2027 (Ref 18).

- 5.15.34 In the Weston Marsh area the Meridian Solar Farm proposals include the construction of a new section of overhead line to the north of the A151 and south west of the Scheme.
- 5.15.35 The potential for inter-project cumulative effects due to the Scheme acting in combination with Meridian Solar Farm predominantly relates to the following topics: Ecology and Biodiversity, Historic Environment, Landscape and Visual, Traffic and Movement and Agriculture and Soils.

Ecology and Biodiversity

- 5.15.36 Within the Meridian Solar Farm ES (Ref 19), adverse Ecology and Biodiversity effects have been reported due to the project in isolation. However, based upon the application of measures set out in the project's CEMP and the provision of on-site hedgerow and habitat suitable for breeding skylark, no significant residual effects due to construction were reported.
- 5.15.37 During operation, the Meridian Solar ES identified adverse Ecology and Biodiversity effects due to the project in isolation. However, based upon the application of measures set out in the project's OEMP, no significant residual effects due to operation were reported.
- 5.15.38 As set out in Section 5.2, the Scheme is located primarily in cropland of negligible ecological importance. It is anticipated that with the application of measures set out within the Outline CEMP and based upon the inclusion of habitat mitigation areas within the Scheme Site Boundary, that significant effects due to construction activities would be avoided. This remains the case when considering the Scheme in combination with the Meridian Solar Farm, given the nature of the habitats affected, assumed CEMP measures and the additional mitigation (habitat creation/enhancement) to be implemented by both projects to address their effects in isolation.
- 5.15.39 Once operational, given that the S37 Overhead Line works would result in a net increase of just 3 pylons in the locality of the existing 2WS and 4ZM overhead lines which meet at Spalding Tee-Point, it is not likely that the Scheme would result in any cumulative effects upon any ecological receptors when considered in combination.
- 5.15.40 Given the proximity of the Scheme to the identified European designated sites within the study area, a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) Stage 1 (Screening) Report has been prepared and submitted in support of both the S37 Applications and Planning Application. This considers the effects of the Scheme alone and in combination with other plans and projects. As detailed further within the HRA Stage 1 (Screening) Report, following an appraisal of the Habitats Sites regarding the relevant impact pathways, it was concluded that Likely Significant Effects of the Scheme can be excluded in relation to all pathways. Therefore, all elements of the Scheme were screened out from a more detailed Appropriate Assessment.

Landscape and Visual Amenity

- 5.15.41 Likely significant effects upon landscape character and visual receptors were identified in the Meridian Solar Farm ES (Ref 20), during construction and operation.

- 5.15.42 Based upon the temporary and localised nature of construction activities associated with the Scheme, it is anticipated that additional significant cumulative effects upon landscape character and visual amenity during construction would be avoided. National Grid will continue to engage with the Meridian Solar Farm project to ensure that if consented, the parallel construction phases of the two developments would be optimised as far as reasonably practicable.
- 5.15.43 The effects of the permanent elements of the Scheme are also relatively localised in nature, given modification of the existing 2WS and 4ZM overhead lines and the location of the Weston Marsh Substation A in close proximity to Spalding Tee-Point. Whilst permanent significant effects upon landscape character and visual amenity are reported in the Meridian Solar Farm ES due to the new overhead line route required for this project, it is considered unlikely that the Scheme would result in any additional or materially different significant cumulative effects when considered in combination.

Traffic and Movement

- 5.15.44 The A16 and A151 were identified as highway links within the Meridian ES (Ref 21) and are proposed to be utilised as construction traffic routes. This highway link would also be utilised by the Scheme. The magnitude of impact due to the Meridian Solar Farm in isolation were assessed within the ES as minor to negligible and therefore not significant.
- 5.15.45 Construction traffic from the Scheme will consist of HGVs and LGVs bringing equipment and materials as well as construction workers cars/vans. Forecast hourly flows are low and avoid the existing highway network peak hours. The impact of construction of the Scheme is not anticipated to give rise to capacity or road safety concerns and therefore is unlikely to result in impacts upon the local road network that would result in significant effects upon users.
- 5.15.46 National Grid will continue to engage with the Meridian Solar Farm project to optimise construction phasing and traffic routing and minimise the volume of cumulative traffic on individual highway links as far as reasonably practicable. In addition, the impacts of both developments, as well as those of Outer Dowsing, would be managed via implementation of CTMPs.
- 5.15.47 Due to the low volume of construction traffic on common construction traffic routes, the opportunity to optimise construction phasing and measures included within the CTMPs, it is not considered likely that the Scheme would result in significant cumulative effects upon traffic and transport.

Historic Environment

- 5.15.48 Within the Meridian Solar Farm ES (Ref 22), significant effects during construction and operation have been identified in relation to the Wykeham Chapel scheduled monument, due to potential impacts on setting as a result of the proximity of the proposed Meridian Solar overhead line.
- 5.15.49 Setting impacts upon the receptor group at Wykeham Chapel due to temporary construction activities associated with the Scheme would be temporary and reversible. Once operational, the Substation Works and S37 Overhead Line Works would be a distant element in views from Wykeham Chapel, given the new components of the Scheme are approximately 2.5 km from this receptor group. Proposed mitigation planting would, over time, provide some screening of the substation infrastructure and integration into the landscape.

- 5.15.50 Potential cumulative effects upon previously unknown archaeological and palaeoenvironmental remains would be managed via the PAD and the measures outlined within the Meridian Solar Farm ES.
- 5.15.51 On this basis, the Scheme is considered unlikely to result in any significant cumulative effects upon the historic environment, when considered in combination with the Meridian Solar Farm, which are additional to the potential significant effects of the Meridian Solar Farm discussed within the ES.

Agriculture and Soils

- 5.15.52 Both developments have the potential to result in the permanent and temporary loss of soil resources during the construction phases of the respective developments. The effect of the Meridian Solar Farm upon agriculture and soils in isolation, have been assessed within the ES as Negligible to Moderate (depending on the sensitivity of the receptor) and therefore significant (Ref 23), due to the temporary but long term loss of approximately 1400 ha of agricultural land, approximately 350 ha of which is BMV Land (Grades 1 and 2).
- 5.15.53 Due to the widespread availability of BMV land within the Lincolnshire County, the relatively small area of land required permanently for the Scheme and adherence to soils management plans submitted as part of the respective applications, there are not likely to be additional significant cumulative effects due to the Scheme and the approximately 19.69 ha of permanent loss discussed in **Section 5.11**.

Summary

- 5.15.54 At this stage significant cumulative effects due to the Scheme acting in combination with the Meridian Solar Farm are considered unlikely. The management and mitigation measures outlined within this report are considered sufficient to ensure the impacts of the Scheme would not be of a scale that would result in additional or materially different significant effects to those reported within the Meridian Solar Farm ES, or discussed within **Sections 5.2-5.14** of this report.
- 5.15.55 The potential for cumulative effects is assessed in further detail within the Meridian Solar Farm ES. This includes assessment of likely inter-project cumulative effects in combination with the Grimsby to Walpole Project, Eastern Green Link 3 and 4 and Outer Dowsing.

Eastern Green Link 3 and 4

- 5.15.56 The Eastern Green Link 3 and 4 (EGL 3 and EGL 4) project is in its pre-application phase, with a PEI Report having been published in support of a statutory consultation that ran from 13 May to 23 June 2025. It is anticipated construction of the Scheme could overlap with that of EGL 3 and EGL 4, given this project is anticipated to commence construction in 2028 (Ref 24).
- 5.15.57 The onshore element of this project includes an underground transmission cable, which is routed across the River Welland and continues south through the Weston Marsh before ultimately connecting with the proposed Walpole B Substation.
- 5.15.58 The draft Order Limits for EGL 3 and EGL 4 are located approximately 2 km to the east of the Scheme Site Boundary. Notwithstanding this distance, there is the potential for cumulative effects to arise due to the impacts of the Scheme acting in

combination with those of EGL 3 and EGL 4 and wider proposed developments within the Weston Marsh area.

- 5.15.59 The potential for inter-project cumulative effects due to Eastern Green Link 3 and 4 acting in combination with the Scheme predominantly relates to the following topics during the construction phase: Ecology and Biodiversity, Landscape and Visual Amenity, Traffic and Movement, Historic Environment and Agriculture and Soils.
- 5.15.60 As with Outer Dowsing, due to the fact that the permanent elements of EGL 3 and EGL 4 in the Weston Marsh area consist of an underground cable, there would be no likely significant cumulative effects during the operational phase.

Ecology and Biodiversity

- 5.15.61 The EGL 3 and EGL 4 PEI Report (Ref 25) includes limited detail on the likely impacts of the project on Ecology and Biodiversity receptors in the Weston Marsh area. Due to the status of protected species surveys for the EGL 3 and EGL 4 project at the time of writing the PEI Report, it was considered too early to make meaningful conclusions with regards to potential biodiversity effects and their significance. This is a limitation in it considering potential cumulative effects at this stage.
- 5.15.62 The EGL 3 and EGL 4 PEI Report does conclude that significant construction stage effects on local and national statutory and non-statutory designated sites beyond 500 m from the draft Order Limits are unlikely.
- 5.15.63 Given the Scheme is located primarily within cropland; the relatively localised nature of impacts during construction; and distance between the Scheme Site Boundary and EGL 3 and EGL 4 draft Order Limits, significant cumulative effects upon ecology and biodiversity receptors are considered unlikely based upon available information.
- 5.15.64 The Wash SPA, Ramsar and SSSI, the Wash and North Norfolk Coast SAC and the Nene Washes SPA, Ramsar and SSSI are within the study areas of both projects. As previously stated, a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) Stage 1 (Screening) Report has been prepared for the Scheme and submitted in support of the S37 Applications and Planning Application. This assessment has concluded that Likely Significant Effects of the Scheme can be excluded in relation to all pathways. Therefore, all elements of the Scheme were screened out from a more detailed Appropriate Assessment.
- 5.15.65 The potential cumulative effects of the of EGL 3 and EGL 4 acting in combination with other plans and projects, including the Scheme, will also be assessed further within the EGL 3 and EGL 4 ES.

Landscape and Visual

- 5.15.66 The EGL 3 and EGL 4 PEI Report (Ref 26) identified major and moderate significant landscape effects on NCA 46 during construction and operation respectively. At a more localised scale, the EGL 3 and EGL 4 PEI Report considered effects upon the Settled Fens LCA and Frampton to Fosdyke Settled Fen LCA. Temporary effects upon both of these LCA due to construction activity associated with EGL 3 and EGL 4 were reported as major adverse and significant. Significant visual effects were also identified at receptors in Fosdyke/Fosdyke Bridge and Moulton Sea's End. These effects are due to temporary construction activities and the presence of construction plant during construction.

- 5.15.67 Due to the relatively localised impacts of the Scheme, no additional or materially different cumulative effects upon NCA 46 are likely. Additional significant cumulative visual effects are also considered unlikely given the distance between the Scheme and EGL 3 and EGL 4 (approximately 2 km).
- 5.15.68 The temporary effects of the Scheme upon landscape character would act in combination with those of EGL 3 and EGL 4, particularly with respect to the Settled Fens LCA within which the Substation Works and S37 Overhead Line Works would be located. However, given the scale of EGL 3 and EGL 4 works in the Weston Marsh area, and the comparatively small scale of the Scheme, it is not considered likely that the Scheme would result in materially different cumulative effects upon the Settled Fens LCA, relative to the effects reported within the EGL 3 and EGL 4 PEI Report.
- 5.15.69 The potential cumulative effects of the of EGL 3 and EGL 4 acting in combination with other plans and projects, including the Scheme, will be assessed in further detail within the EGL 3 and EGL 4 ES.

Traffic and Movement

- 5.15.70 Given the temporal overlap and proximity of the Scheme and EGL 3 and EGL 4, construction traffic generated for the two developments has the potential to exacerbate the respective effects upon traffic and movement of the two developments in isolation. The access points of relevance to both projects are the A16, A17 and A151, which are anticipated to be utilised by both projects during their respective construction phases (Ref 27).
- 5.15.71 Of those highways links, the A16, projected construction traffic associated with EGL 3 and EGL 4 was determined to exceed the relevant IEMA thresholds and therefore effects upon users were subject to further assessment within the EGL 3 and EGL 4 PEI Report. This further assessment predicted neutral to slight adverse effects on users of the A16, which are not significant.
- 5.15.72 The detailed construction programme and the numbers of construction workers and associated Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) for the Scheme has not yet been confirmed. However, both projects would implement appropriate standard mitigation measures and traffic management via the CTMPs submitted with the respective applications. Given the scale of anticipated construction traffic attributable to the Scheme and the opportunity to optimise construction phasing, additional significant cumulative traffic and movement effects are considered unlikely.

Historic Environment

- 5.15.73 The EGL 3 and EGL 4 PEI Report (Ref 28) considered historic environment receptors within 500 m of the draft Order Limits, although it was noted that a 1 km study area will be adopted for the ES. There are no designated historic environment assets within this 500 m study area that are also located in the study area adopted for the Scheme for the purposes of this report. A non-designated asset (MLI122401 - A disused tramway depicted on the 1956 and 1977 OS maps) is located in the locality of Wraggmarsh House Farm. Cumulative effects upon this asset are unlikely given distance from the Scheme.
- 5.15.74 There is potential for in-combination effects upon the setting of the two grade II listed assets associated with Wraggmarsh House Farm, due to concurrent activities associated with the Scheme, EGL 3 and EGL 4 and Outer Dowsing. However, given

the distance of these assets from the closest temporary works associated with the Scheme (1.6 km), significant cumulative effects are not considered to be likely.

Agriculture and Soils

- 5.15.75 Both projects would result in the temporary and permanent loss of soil resources during the construction phases of the respective developments. The PEI Report for EGL 3 and EGL 4 (Ref 29) reported slight to moderate adverse effects for the loss of 5,597 ha of BMV land on a temporary basis, which would be reinstated post construction. Permanent loss of between 33 – 35 ha of BMV land is also anticipated due to the project, depending on which substation option is taken forward. This would result in a very large adverse effect which would be significant.
- 5.15.76 Due to the widespread availability of BMV land within the Lincolnshire County, the relatively small area of land required permanently for the Scheme and adherence to soils management plans submitted as part of the respective applications, additional significant cumulative effects upon agricultural land combination are considered unlikely.

Summary

- 5.15.77 During operation, cumulative effects due to the Scheme acting in combination with EGL 3 and EGL 4 are unlikely, given land above the underground cable route within the Weston Marsh area would be reinstated.
- 5.15.78 At this stage significant cumulative effects due to construction of the Scheme acting in combination with construction of EGL 3 and EGL 4 are considered unlikely. The management and mitigation measures outlined within this report are considered sufficient to ensure the impacts of the Scheme would be relatively localised and not of a scale that would result in additional or materially different significant effects to those reported within the EGL 3 and EGL 4 PEI Report, or discussed within **Sections 5.2-5.14** of this report.
- 5.15.79 The potential for cumulative effects is however anticipated to be assessed in further detail within the EGL 3 and EGL 4 ES, to be submitted in support of the DCO application for this project. Based upon the EGL 3 and EGL 4 PEI Report, this will include assessment of any likely inter-project cumulative effects of EGL 3 and EGL 4 in combination with the Grimsby to Walpole Project, Outer Dowsing and the Meridian Solar Farm. These will be reported within the EGL 3 and EGL 4 Cumulative Effects Assessment.

Grimsby to Walpole

- 5.15.80 A preliminary assessment of the likely significant effects of the Grimsby to Walpole Project are reported within the PEI Report published in June 2025 (Ref 30) and the Supplementary PEI Report which was prepared to support a Targeted Consultation in the Weston Marsh area in late 2025.
- 5.15.81 The Supplementary PEI Report considers a worst-case assessment scenario which assumes that all elements of the Grimsby to Walpole Project would be constructed between 2029-2033. This assessment scenario includes the construction of two new substations in the Weston Marsh area - Weston Marsh Substation A and Weston Marsh Substation B - and their associated connections. As such, the preliminary assessment reported in the Grimsby to Walpole Supplementary PEI Report assesses the impacts of elements of infrastructure which are common to the Scheme, as well

as works included within the wider Grimsby to Walpole Project within Section 5: New Weston Marsh Substations A and B. The assessment reported in the Grimsby to Walpole Supplementary PEI Report is therefore inherently cumulative.

- 5.15.82 However as set out within Section 2, given elements of the proposed new Weston Marsh Substation A need to be operational ahead of the Grimsby to Walpole Project's programmed connection date of 2033, National Grid are progressing the Scheme via separate consents to facilitate connection of Outer Dowsing earlier than 2033.
- 5.15.83 Given the assessment scenario which has been assumed within the Grimsby to Walpole assessments, there is not considered to be potential for significant cumulative effects, beyond those significant effects which are reported within the Grimsby to Walpole Supplementary PEI Report. These will be considered by the SoS in due course through the DCO examination, following completion of the Grimsby to Walpole ES.
- 5.15.84 Should the Scheme secure planning consent and Section 37 consent ahead of the Grimsby to Walpole DCO submission, then it is anticipated that an additional scenario will be considered within the Grimsby to Walpole ES, which will report the implications of construction of part of the Weston Marsh Substation A (Substation Works), the S37 Overhead Line Works and the Exempt Overhead Line Works commencing at an earlier date than 2029.

Weston Marsh to East Leicestershire (WMEL)

- 5.15.85 This project has not yet progressed to statutory consultation, and a PEI Report has therefore not been published. As such, it is not possible at this stage to consider potential cumulative effects in any detail. The potential inter-project cumulative effects of this project acting in combination with the Scheme and other existing and/or committed developments within the Weston Marsh area, will be considered further within the WMEL PEI Report and subsequent ES.

Ossian Transmission Infrastructure

- 5.15.86 This project was originally considered as a project which could have potential cumulative interactions with the Scheme in the first iteration of this report in November 2025, due to its proximity, scale and the potential for temporal overlap of construction phases.
- 5.15.87 However, since this report was first prepared, at the time of writing Ossian Transmission Infrastructure has since withdrawn from the DCO pre-application process in March 2026. As a result, this project has not been considered further within this report.

Summary

- 5.15.88 The EIA Regulations require consideration of "*the cumulation of effects with other existing and approved developments*". For the purposes of this report, this has included Outer Dowsing. No additional significant cumulative effects are predicted (beyond the significant effects reported within the Outer Dowsing ES) as a result of the impacts of the Scheme acting in combination with those of Outer Dowsing.
- 5.15.89 No other NSIP projects within the Weston Marsh area are currently approved. Therefore, it is not a requirement of the SoS to consider the cumulation of effects with

these projects in reaching a screening decision for the Scheme. Notwithstanding this, the potential for significant cumulative effects of the Scheme acting in combination with forthcoming NSIP projects have been discussed within this report. The predicted impacts of the Scheme during construction and operation are predicted to be relatively localised, given the existing 2WS and 4ZM overhead lines which meet at Spalding Tee-Point. Furthermore, the management and mitigation measures outlined within this report are considered sufficient to ensure the impacts of the Scheme would not be of a scale that would result in additional or materially different significant effects to those previously reported within published ES and PEI deliverables.

- 5.15.90 Importantly, potential cumulative effects will be assessed in further detail within each respective ES submitted in support of the DCO applications for forthcoming NSIPs identified in this report. Therefore, the Planning Inspectorate will, in due course, consider these potential cumulative effects in determining the outcome of each DCO examination.

6. Conclusions

- 6.1.1 The potential environmental effects of the Scheme in its entirety and whether these are likely to be significant have been discussed within this report. However, it is noted that each of the four components of the Scheme are subject to different consenting regimes and as such distinct requirements under the relevant Environmental Impact Assessment regulations.
- 6.1.2 Given the Substation Works are subject to consent via a Planning Application under the TCPA, a Screening Opinion was secured from SHDC in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017. This concluded that the Substation Works does not constitute EIA Development and therefore an ES was not required in support of the TCPA Planning Application. A full planning application for the Substation Works was submitted to and validated by SHDC in May 2026.
- 6.1.3 Given that elements of the proposed overhead line works are planned to be consented under Section 37 of the Electricity Act, the EIA Regulations are also applicable. Therefore, further to the receipt of a Screening Opinion from SHDC, this report has been prepared to inform a screening decision from the SoS for DESNZ in relation to the S37 Overhead Line Works, presenting a holistic screening assessment of the Scheme in its totality.
- 6.1.4 This report considers the S37 Overhead Line Works to be classified as Schedule 2 development and has considered the potential for significant environmental effects to occur as a result of the construction and operation of the Scheme.
- 6.1.5 Potential environmental impacts across a range of environmental topics have been considered, taking into account the characteristics of the Scheme and the location of sensitive receptors in the vicinity of the Scheme Site Boundary (**Figure 1**). The screening assessment indicates that the construction and operation of the Scheme, when assuming embedded design and standard construction management measures, would not result in likely significant environmental effects for the majority of environmental topics, with the exception of Agriculture and Soils.
- 6.1.6 Given the very high sensitivity of Grade 1 land, the total permanent loss of approximately 19.73 ha would, based upon published IEMA assessment guidance, result in a significant effect. In reaching a screening decision, criteria within Schedule 3 of the EIA Regulations also requires consideration of the “*relative abundance, availability and quality of natural resources (including soil, land...)* in the area...” As identified in relation to the baseline receiving environment, Lincolnshire County is mapped as comprising 94.5 % BMV land. It is worth noting the Substation Works is the dominant component in terms of the permanent loss of Grade 1 land, which is the subject of a separate Planning Application to SHDC.
- 6.1.7 Permanent loss of agricultural land was considered previously by SHDC in reaching a negative EIA Screening Opinion in relation to the Scheme, requested due to planned submission of a Planning Application for the Substation Works. As noted in the SHDC Screening Opinion, in reaching a negative screening opinion (EIA not required) this does not indicate that the Scheme will not have an adverse impact on the receiving environment. Rather, it constitutes an opinion that any impact is unlikely

to be significant in terms of the criteria outlined in Schedule 3 of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations.

- 6.1.8 The information presented within this Report to Inform the Screening Decision are further supported by the detailed technical assessments listed in **Table 3.1**, which provide supporting evidence in relation to the likely impacts of the Scheme.

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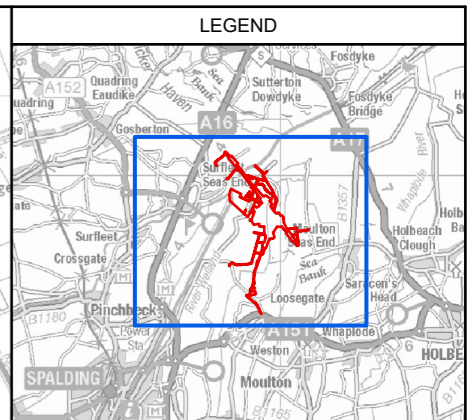
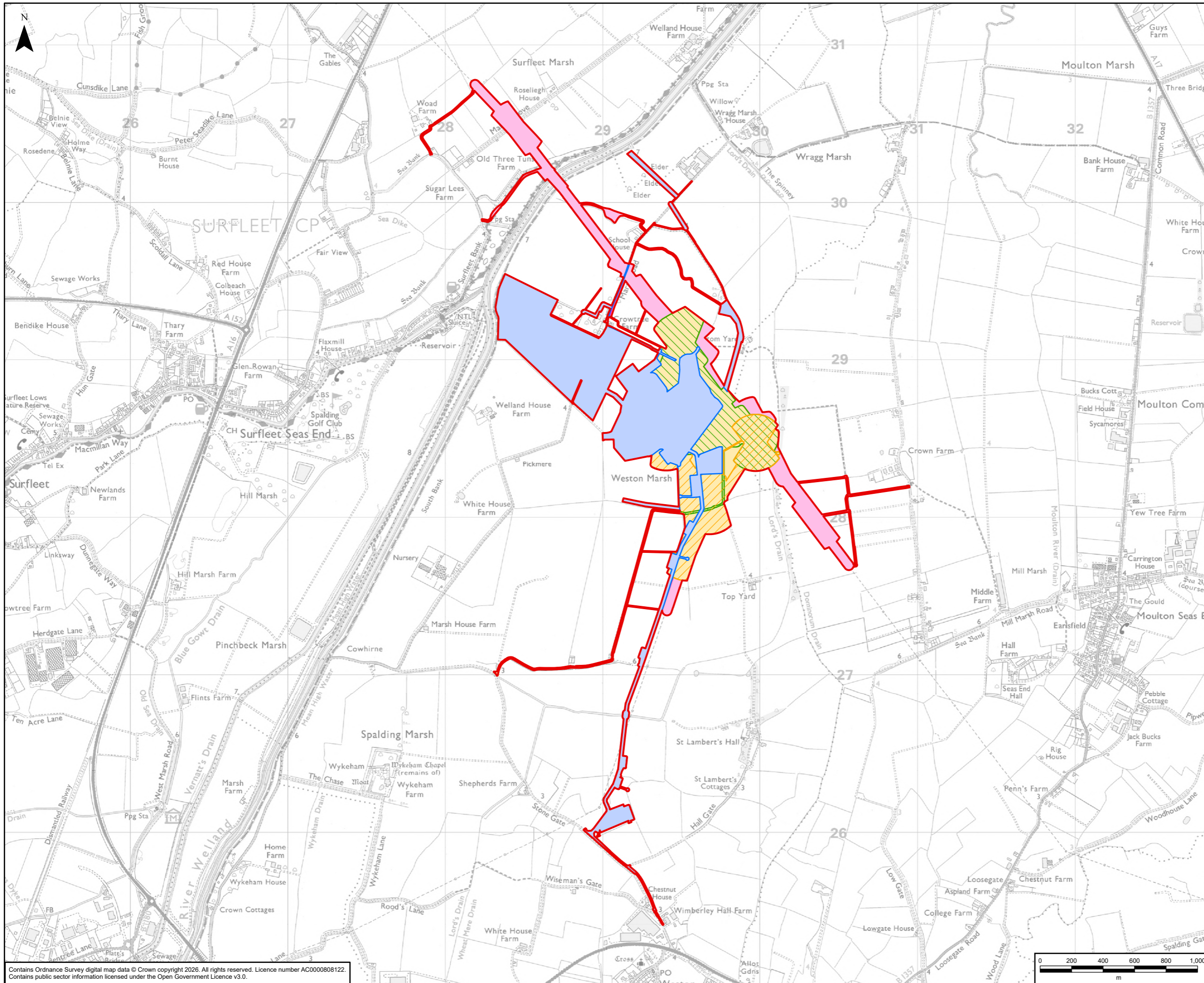
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Figures

Figure 1 Scheme Site Boundary



- Legend**
- Scheme Site Boundary
 - Substation Works Site Boundary
 - S37 OHL Works Site Boundary
 - Exempt Overhead Line Works Site Boundary
 - S37 - 4ZM - OHL Works Site Boundary
 - S37 - 2WS - OHL Works Site Boundary

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Rev	Date	Description	GIS	Chk	App

nationalgrid

Purpose: S37 APPLICATION

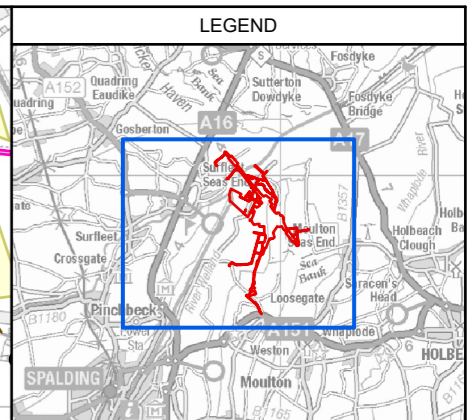
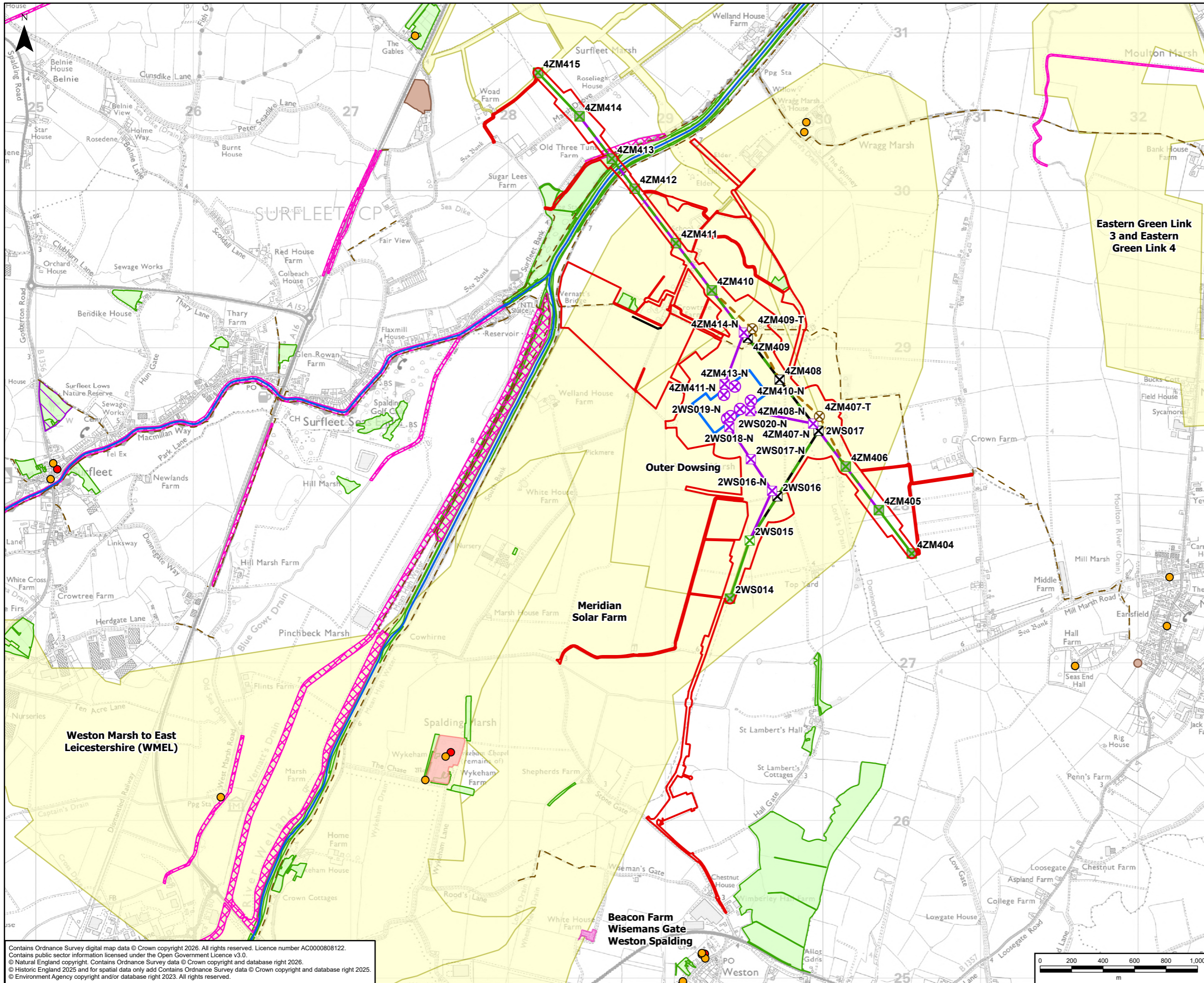
Scheme: PROPOSED ELECTRICITY SUBSTATION AND OVERHEAD LINE WORKS AT WESTON MARSH

Document Title: FIGURE 1 SCHEME SITE BOUNDARY

Creator: MM	Date: 28/05/2026	Checker: SC	Date: 28/05/2026	Approver: DR	Date: 28/05/2026
Document Type: FIGURE	Scale: 1:22,500	Format: A3	Sheets: 1 OF 1	Rev: A	

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Figure 2 Environmental Constraints Plan



LEGEND

Legend

- Scheme Site Boundary
- Existing Pylon
- Existing Pylon to be Modified
- Existing Pylon to be Dismantled
- New Gantry
- New Pylon
- Indicative Temporary Structure
- Dismantled NG OHL
- Existing NG OHL
- Modified NG OHL
- New NG OHL
- Temporary OHL

Substation - Town and Country Planning Act

- Indicative New Substation Boundary
- Indicative Permanent Substation Access Route

Environmental Constraints

- Listed Building - Grade I
- Listed Building - Grade II
- Statutory Main River
- Public Right of Way
- Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
- Local Wildlife Site (LWS)
- Priority Habitats Inventory
- Historic Landfill Site
- Scheduled Monument

Cumulative Development Boundary CDR Category

- NSIP
- Planning Application

A	29/05/2026	First Issue	MM	SC	DR
Rev	Date	Description	GIS	Chk	App

nationalgrid

Purpose: S37 APPLICATION

Scheme: PROPOSED ELECTRICITY SUBSTATION AND OVERHEAD LINE WORKS AT WESTON MARSH

Document Title: FIGURE 2 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSTRAINTS PLAN

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MM	29/05/2026	SC	29/05/2026	DR	29/05/2026
Document Type:	Scale:	Format:	Sheets:	Rev:	
FIGURE	1:22,500	A3	1 OF 1	A	

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Appendix A Statutory Environmental Body Consultation Responses in relation to the Draft Report to Inform the Screening Decision

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Our ref: AN/2025/137233/01-L01

Your ref:

Date: 14 November 2025

Dear [REDACTED]

Grimsby to Walpole: Weston Marsh A, Section 37 of The Electricity Act 1989 - Request for Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Opinion

Thank you for consulting us on your EIA screening report, which we received on 12th November 2025.

The Environment Agency does not normally provide feedback to inform screening opinion requests. However, we have undertaken a brief review of the draft report provided (*Report to Inform Screening Decision under The Electricity Works (Environmental Impact Assessment)(England and Wales) Regulations 2017, November 2025*). Based on the information supplied, while we do not believe that the proposal is likely to have a significant environmental effect within the scope of our remit, we cannot comment on matters such as additional traffic movements, the sensitivity of all receptors in the surrounding area, or the potential cumulative impact of the development.

We welcome the control measures you have outlined for implementation during construction to minimise effects on matters of concern to us, and we look forward to reviewing the detail in due course.

Should you require any additional information, or wish to discuss these matters further, please do not hesitate to contact me at the number below.

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Date: 21 November 2025
Our ref: 533243
Your ref: n/a



██████████
National Grid
██████████@nationalgrid.com

Hornbeam House
Crewe Business Park
Electra Way
Crewe
Cheshire
CW1 6GJ

T 0300 060 3900

BY EMAIL ONLY

Dear ██████████

Environmental Impact Assessment Screening consultation: EIA Screening Decision consultation under The Electricity Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) (England and Wales) Regulations 2017 in relation to Proposed Overhead Line Works.

Location: in the Vicinity of the Spalding Tee-Point, Surfleet Seas End and Moulton Seas End.

Thank you for your consultation on the above dated 12 November 2025 which was received by Natural England on 13 November 2025.

Natural England is a non-departmental public body. Our statutory purpose is to ensure that the natural environment is conserved, enhanced, and managed for the benefit of present and future generations, thereby contributing to sustainable development.

It is Natural England's advice, on the basis of the material supplied with the consultation, that likely significant effects on statutorily designated nature conservation sites cannot be ruled out. However, given the commitment to produce a HRA to address any potential impacts to European designated sites, an EIA may not be required.

Schedule 3(2) of the Town & Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 requires consideration of the selection criteria for Schedule 2 EIA development and identification of 'environmental sensitivity'.

As identified in the report to inform screening, The Wash SPA, Ramsar site and SSSI and The Wash and North Norfolk Coast SAC fall within 10 km of the Screening Boundary. In addition, Nene Washes SPA, Ramsar site and SSSI, where bird species with large foraging ranges are noted as, or one of, the qualifying feature fall within 30 km of the Screening Boundary. Natural England welcome the commitment at paragraph 5.2.7 for a HRA report to be produced, assessing the potential impacts to these sites from all three components of the proposal. As such, whilst NE cannot rule out Likely Significant Effects based on the material provided to date, it is considered that any such effects would be identified and addressed effectively via the HRA process; an EIA may not be required.

The proposal is not located within or partly within a National Park, National Landscape (formerly Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty) or Heritage Coast and is unlikely to impact upon the purposes for which these areas are designated or defined.

Natural England does not hold information on the location of significant populations of protected species, so is unable to advise whether this proposal is likely to affect protected species to such an extent as to require an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). The developer must provide

sufficient information for your authority to assess whether protected species are likely to be affected and, if so, whether appropriate avoidance, mitigation, or compensation measures can be put in place. Further information is included in Natural England's [standing advice](#) on protected species.

Furthermore, Natural England does not routinely maintain locally specific data on all environmental assets. This development proposal may have environmental impacts on priority species and/or habitats, local wildlife sites, soils and best and most versatile agricultural land, or on local landscape character that may be sufficient to warrant an EIA. Information on ancient woodland, ancient and veteran trees is set out in Natural England/Forestry Commission [standing advice](#).

We therefore recommend that advice is sought from your ecological, landscape and soils advisers, local record centre, recording society or wildlife body on the local soils, best and most versatile agricultural land, landscape, geodiversity and biodiversity receptors that may be affected by the proposed development before determining whether an EIA is necessary.

Should you determine that an EIA is not required in this case, you should still ensure that the application is supported by sufficient biodiversity, landscape and other environmental information in order for you to assess the weight to give these material considerations when determining the planning application.

Should the proposal be amended in a way which significantly affects its impact on the natural environment then, in accordance with Section 4 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, Natural England should be consulted again.

Please note that this response relates only to the EIA screening consultation. Natural England will continue to provide advice through the pre-application process.

Yours sincerely

[Redacted signature block]



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██████████
Senior Planning and Consents Manager

██████████ [@nationalgrid.com](mailto:██████████@nationalgrid.com)

By Email only

20 February 2026

Dear ██████████

Application by National Grid Electricity Transmission plc ('National Grid') for the proposed Overhead Line Works in the Vicinity of the Spalding Tee-Point, Surfleet Seas End and Moulton Seas End.

Request for written feedback and further information to Support EIA Screening Decision consultation under The Electricity Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) (England and Wales) Regulations 2017

The Applicant has provided notice to the Marine Management Organisation (MMO) that National Grid of 1-3 Strand, London, WC2N 5EHG intends to apply to the Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ) under Section 37 of the Electricity Act 1989 in respect of two sections of new build 400 kilovolt (Kv) overhead lines (OHL) located in the vicinity of the Spalding Tee-Point, Surfleet Seas End and Moulton Seas End.

Description of the project

The following elements are included as part of the proposed S37 Overhead Line Works:

- 1.8 kilometer (km) of new 400 kV overhead line to divert the existing 4ZM and 2WS overhead lines into the new Weston Marsh Substation A including seven new pylons and structural changes to existing pylons:
 - Section 1 originates from the existing 4ZM overhead line at the newly constructed pylon 4ZM414-N and runs into the northern façade of the new Weston Marsh Substation A;
 - Section 2 originates from the southern façade of the new Weston Marsh Substation A and connects into the existing 4ZM overhead line via a newly constructed pylon 4ZM407-N; and
 - Section 3 originates from the southern façade of the new Weston Marsh Substation A and connects into the existing 2WS overhead line via an existing pylon 2WS-015.
2. Removal of 1.5 km of existing 4ZM and 2WS overhead lines including the removal of four pylons;
3. Associated temporary construction works.

The MMO notes that OHL could require a marine licence under the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009. The applicant has advised that there will be an interface with the River Welland where the existing conductors over the river (4ZM overhead line route) would be replaced. The exact construction methodology is still to be determined, but the current 'worst case' proposals would involve:

- the use of a boat to carry the conductors over the river
- temporary overnight river closure to facilitate above and subsequent winching up of conductors
- possible temporary pontoons at the banks

Temporary scaffolding could be erected either side of the river with netting spanning over the river. The use of drone deployment instead of a boat is also being considered.

The MMO understands that the Applicant has done an initial review of the interactive assessment tool ([Check if you need a marine licence - MCMS Self Service](#)) to determine whether the proposed works could qualify as self-service and have deemed that the proposed works can be covered by a self service marine license.

The MMO advises the applicant to follow the following steps for the proposed works –

How to Apply

1. **Check Eligibility:** Use the [Self-Service Activities Table](#) to see if your work qualifies.
2. **Interactive Tool:** Use the [MMO Assistance Tool](#) to self-assess your activity against environmental and location criteria.
3. **Submit via MCMS:** If eligible, complete the application through the [Marine Case Management System \(MCMS\)](#).

Need help? You can contact the Marine Licence Business Support team at **0191 376 2791** during weekday business hours.

With the proposed works being able to be covered by a self-service license, the MMO would class these as low risk and these would not require screening under the Marine Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2007.

If the proposal changes in terms of having additional works below MHWS, the MMO must be contacted for comments, the MMO supports the council and DESNZ decision in relation to EIA requirements.

This is without prejudice to any decision the MMO may make on any associated application for consent, permission, approval or any other type of authorisation submitted to the MMO either for the works in the marine area or for any other authorisation relevant to the Project. The MMO reserves the right to modify its present advice or opinion in view of any additional matters or information that may come to our attention.

If you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me using the details provided below.

Yours sincerely

[Redacted signature block]

[Redacted contact details]

[Redacted contact details]

[REDACTED]

Subject:

FW: Grimsby to Walpole Weston Marsh A TCPA s37 Application Feedback Request
HE ref PL00800442

From: [REDACTED] >

Sent: 05 December 2025 16:00

To: [REDACTED];

Cc: [REDACTED]

Subject: Grimsby to Walpole Weston Marsh A TCPA s37 Application Feedback Request HE ref PL00800442

Dear [REDACTED]

Re Grimsby to Walpole Weston Marsh A TCPA/s37 Application Feedback Request (S37 Electricity Act)

Section 37 Application for Proposed Overhead Line Works at Weston Marsh Report to Inform Screening Decision under The Electricity Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) (England and Wales) Regulations 2017

We have considered the screening draft report and reviewed our own data including for Wykeham Chapel Moated site SM / GI listed Wykeham Chapel and the associated GII listed Chapel Farmhouse.

We have not identified likely significant effects in respect of the historic environment as regards Grimsby to Walpole Weston Marsh Substation A, we welcome that National Grid will submit a non-statutory Environmental Assessment Report (EAR) including heritage matters with the S37 Application if the SoS determines the S37 Application does not require EIA. We note that SHDC have determined that the scheme is not EIA for the purposes of the 1990 Town and Country Planning Act application.

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]



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