

PROJECT EVIDENCE

24 JULY 2026

**THE NATIONAL GRID ELECTRICITY TRANSMISSION (WEST BURTON TO RATCLIFFE-ON-SOAR REFURBISHMENT PROJECT)
COMPULSORY PURCHASE ORDER 2026**

STATEMENT OF EVIDENCE

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1. QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

- 1.1 My name is Leanne Evans, and I am a Project Director with National Grid Electricity Transmission plc ("**NGET**"), specialising in project optioneering, development and project management of major infrastructure projects which includes substation, new overhead power line projects, overhead line replacement and cable replacement projects and refurbishment projects such as the West Burton to Ratcliffe-on-Soar Project (the "**Project**").
- 1.2 I have a degree in History and International Relations from De Montfort University Leicester and a Master of Philosophy from the University of Birmingham. I am a NEC accredited professional and have completed the Major Projects Leadership Programme at the Saïd Business School at the University of Oxford. I have worked in the energy industry for 26 years, 18 years of which have been within Electricity Transmission with breadth of knowledge and experience from working within various roles across Commercial, Regulatory and Project Management.
- 1.3 In my current role with NGET, I am a Project Director accountable for the management for the development and ultimately the delivery of projects, leading a team of senior and lead project managers, engineers and support staff responsible for the front-end engineering, project design works, and early contractor engagement works. My responsibilities in this role include steering projects through required internal governance, ensuring funding is in place to deliver the works, ensuring contracts are in place to manage the design and construction activities and managing senior relationships with stakeholders.
- 1.4 Prior to this, I was a Senior Project Manager, responsible for a portfolio of complex Electricity Transmission infrastructure projects, leading multiple project teams at different phases of optioneering, development and delivery across substation, overhead line and cable replacement projects. This included the delivery of the Peak District East Visual Impact Provision (**VIP**) project, which involved the removal of a section of overhead line and replacing with a new cable solution; Integrated Security Solution projects; and the Hartlepool – West Bolden Circuit (**ZZA**) turn in at Hawthorn Pit (**WHT1**).
- 1.5 Previous roles have also included regulatory submission and development positions where I led the project management of the RIIO ET2 Price Control Submission (Ofgem's regulatory framework is known as RIIO (Revenue = Incentives + Innovation + Outputs), and multiple regulatory investment submissions, including the Dinorwig to Pentir Cable Replacement Project and Cyber Security.

2. SCOPE AND STRUCTURE OF EVIDENCE

The Project

- 2.1 This statement has been prepared in support of the Project and The National Grid Electricity Transmission plc (West Burton to Ratcliffe-on-Soar Refurbishment Project) Compulsory Purchase Order 2026 (the "**Order**") that has been made by NGET. In this Statement, the land which is the subject of compulsory purchase powers is referred to as the "**Order Land**". The Order Land is shown on the Order Maps (**CD, C02**) and described in the Schedule to the Order.
- 2.2 The purpose of my evidence is to explain what the Project is and why it is needed. Read together with the evidence of NGET's other witnesses, it demonstrates that the statutory requirements, 'need case' and the 'compelling case in the public interest' tests are met. In particular, this statement provides an overview of NGET and the Project need case and funding and delivery proposals for the Project and provides supporting information relating to the reasons for the Order.
- 2.3 This statement of evidence is structured as follows:
 - 2.3.1 Section 2 Scope and structure of evidence.
 - 2.3.2 Section 3 Overview of National Grid Electricity Transmission plc
 - 2.3.3 Section 4 Overview of the Project.

- 2.3.4 Section 5 Alternatives to the Project.
- 2.3.5 Section 6 The Need for the Project.
- 2.3.6 Section 7 Benefits of the Project.
- 2.3.7 Section 8 How the Project will be delivered and funded.
- 2.3.8 Section 9 GEMA consent.
- 2.3.9 Section 10 Response to the Objections.
- 2.3.10 Section 11 Human Rights and Equality Act Considerations.
- 2.3.11 Section 12 Conclusions.
- 2.3.12 Section 13 Declaration.
- 2.4 My evidence does not address the land and rights required for the Project, which is addressed by Mr Harper in his Statement of Evidence (**NGET/DH/1**). Nor does it address engineering issues or responses to stakeholder objections relating to engineering matters, which is the responsibility of Mr Kirby and is dealt with in his Statement of Evidence (**NGET/WL/1**). Engagement with non-engineering stakeholders, for example landowners, is also not covered within my evidence and is addressed by Mr Harper. Planning matters are dealt with in the evidence prepared by Mr Jarvis (**NGET/PJ/1**). I have had regard to all of these statements, which I have seen in draft, in the preparation of my own evidence.
- 2.5 References in my evidence to the core documents are made by the abbreviation, for example, "**(CD, CXX)**". The evidence of other witnesses is referred to by the name of the author.

3. **OVERVIEW OF NATIONAL GRID ELECTRICITY TRANSMISSION PLC**

- 3.1 NGET is a division of National Grid plc and is responsible for the high voltage electricity transmission network across England and Wales. NGET owns and maintains a network comprising approximately 4,500 miles of overhead lines, 900 miles of underground cables and in excess of 300 substations. Its core function is the transportation of electricity from points of generation to distribution networks, thereby ensuring the continuity and reliability of electricity supply to domestic and commercial consumers.
- 3.2 NGET is currently leading The Great Grid Upgrade, an important initiative aimed at modernising the electricity transmission infrastructure to accommodate the increasing demand for clean, low-carbon energy. This upgrade includes 17 major projects designed to enhance the capacity and resilience of the electricity network.
- 3.3 NGET operates within the regulatory framework established by the Office of Gas and Electricity Markets ("**Ofgem**"), which has oversight of the electricity market in the United Kingdom. NGET is required to comply with its licence obligations and to ensure that its investment decisions are aligned with national energy policy.
- 3.4 NGET plays a crucial role in supporting the UK government's climate goals, including achieving 50GW of renewable energy by 2030 and transitioning to a net-zero energy system by 2050. The organisation is focused on integrating renewable energy sources, such as offshore wind, into the grid.
- 3.5 In summary, NGET occupies a position of central importance within the UK's energy infrastructure, with a focus on the modernisation of the electricity transmission network, the facilitation of decarbonisation and the assurance of reliable energy delivery to meet present and future demand.

4. **OVERVIEW OF THE PROJECT**

- 4.1 The Project is based within the administrative boundaries of Bassetlaw District Council, Newark and Sherwood District Council, Gedling Borough Council and Rushcliffe Borough Council (the "**Councils**"). The Project comprises the refurbishment of the existing 400kV single circuits (of which the circuit numbers are shown in brackets): West Burton to High Marnham (A403), High Marnham to Stoke Bardolph (A41E), Ratcliffe-on-Soar to Stoke

Bardolph (A41F) (this aspect of the Project is referred to as the **"WRRE Project"**) and Cottam to Staythorpe 1 (A408, referred to as the **"SCRE Project"**). Together the WRRE Project and SCRE Project form the Project. The Project also includes the associated works detailed below. As the Project is a refurbishment project, most of the Order Land either comprises of, or is immediately adjacent to, land on which existing electricity transmission infrastructure is already situated. As described further below, the Order Land is predominantly agricultural land.

- 4.2 The existing single circuits being reconductored as part of the Project span across approximately 106 kilometres ("**km**") and electricity is transmitted from West Burton 400kV Substation to High Marnham 400kV Substation, High Marnham 400kV Substation to Stoke Bardolph 400kV Substation and Stoke Bardolph 400kV Substation to Ratcliffe-on-Soar 400kV Substation. There is also a requirement to reductor the Overhead line route between Staythorpe 400kV Substation and Cottam 400kV Substation.
- 4.3 The overhead line location plan referenced within the Statement of Case ("**OHL Location Plan**") (**CD, C08**) illustrates the overhead line routes and adjoining circuits forming part of the Project.
- 4.4 The Project comprises the reconductoring of the existing overhead electric lines between the sections referred to below (shown on the OHL Location plan) which includes the replacement of fittings, earth wire, steelwork and tower furniture (including the replacement of Colour Plates and Arcing Horns) (the **"OHL Works"**). There is no increase to the height or change in location of the towers which form part of the OHL Works.
- 4.5 The WRRE Project overhead line route shown on the OHL Location Plan covers the following sections:
 - 4.5.1 West Burton to High Marnham (A403), is approximately 14 km long and runs between towers ZDA210D and ZDA247. This section is currently strung with a conductor, which will be retained as it is already suitable for the required rating, and includes a short 0.229 km oil-filled cable section which is required to be replaced to meet rating requirements.
 - 4.5.2 High Marnham to Stoke Bardolph (A41E), spans approximately 40 km and runs between towers ZDA247 and ZDF57 and ZD1 to ZD061. This section will be reductored using more power efficient conductors as the existing conductors do not meet the required rating and includes crossings over the A1 road, railway lines near Radcliffe on Trent, Keyworth, Ruddington, Weston and Thurgaton Station, a viaduct at Radcliffe on Trent, the River Soar, and Hoveringham Lake.
 - 4.5.3 Stoke Bardolph to Ratcliffe-on-Soar (A41F), is approximately 25 km long and runs between towers ZD61 and ZD137. It will also be reductored using more power efficient conductors as the existing conductors do not meet the required rating and includes four crossings, including major roads (A453, A60, A52) and the River Soar. This section also includes a short 0.17km oil-filled cable which is required to be replaced to meet rating requirements. The WRRE Project route predominantly crosses agricultural land.
 - 4.5.4 At the West Burton and Ratcliffe-on-Soar substations, new underground cables and high voltage equipment will be replaced to be consistent with the uprated overhead line capacity (the **"Cable Works"**) as shown on the cable location plan referenced within the Statement of Case (**CD, C08**) ("**Cable Location Plan**").
- 4.6 The SCRE Project route covers the following section:
 - 4.6.1 Between Cottam and Staythorpe substations, is approximately 27 km long and runs between towers ZDA228B and ZDA248B, continuing towards ZD1 for interface. This section will be reductored using more power efficient conductors as the existing conductors do not meet the required rating. This route includes a 500 m cable section at Cottam substation which has been assessed as sufficient for the current rating requirements and is, therefore, not being

replaced. The SCRE route runs through rural Nottinghamshire, crossing the A1 road, the River Soar, farmland and minor roads.

- 4.7 Equipment uprating works will also be carried out at Cottam, Staythorpe, and Stoke Bardolph substations. High Marnham substation is excluded from this Project scope of works as it forms part of the separate Chesterfield to High Marnham project.
- 4.8 In addition, all of the existing infrastructure referred to above will require ongoing maintenance, which is included as part of this Project. The Project works are described in more detail below.
- 4.9 NGET developed a design for the Project for the purposes of considering the consents required for the Project and promoting the Order. This was informed by a wide range of surveys and assessments. Insofar as the consents required for the Project are concerned, these are explained further in the Statement of Case (**CD, C08**) and the Statement of Evidence of Mr Jarvis (**NGET/JP/1**). The appointed principal contractor will be responsible for further developing the detailed design and securing any remaining secondary consents.
- 4.10 NGET has had regard to the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015 (the "**CDM**") in its design of the Project. CDM ensures health and safety is coordinated and managed throughout all stages of a construction project (including during the development, design, construction and procurement stages) in order to reduce the risk of harm to those who will build, use and maintain structures. These requirements have influenced the design and the areas required for construction, including but not limited to, compounds and access roads.

OHL Works

- 4.11 The four OHL Work packages comprise a common scope of works including steelwork refurbishment and replacement, refurbishment or replacement of anti-climbing devices and associated accessories, foundation refurbishment, and changes to protection and control settings where necessary. These activities are common across the following elements:
- 4.11.1 A403 High Marnham to West Burton,
- 4.11.2 A41E High Marnham (North) to Stoke Bardolph,
- 4.11.3 A41F Ratcliffe to Stoke Bardolph, and
- 4.11.4 A408 Cottam to Staythorpe 1.
- 4.12 The common OHL component parts of the Project are indicated below in the table and explained in further detail in Mr Kirby's Statement of Evidence (**NGET/WK/1**) which focuses on engineering matters. Components not included in the table below are not required to be upgraded as part of the Project scope:

Component / Work Item	A403 High Marnham to West Burton	A41E High Marnham (North) - QB2 Stoke Bardolph	A41F Ratcliffe - Stoke Bardolph	A408 Cottam - Staythorpe 1	Commonality
Steelwork refurbishment and replacement	Included	Included	Included	Included	Included in 4 of 4 OHL packages
Repair or replacement of anti-climbing devices and other accessories, including property plates	Included	Included	Included	Included	Included in 4 of 4 OHL packages
Foundation refurbishment	Included	Included	Included	Included	Included in 4 of 4 OHL packages
Protection and control settings changes where necessary	Included	Included	Included	Included	Included in 4 of 4 OHL packages

Component / Work Item	A403 High Marnham to West Burton	A41E High Marnham (North) - QB2 Stoke Bardolph	A41F Ratcliffe - Stoke Bardolph	A408 Cottam - Staythorpe 1	Commonality
Replacement of all conductors, fittings, insulators and associated tower furniture	Not included	Included	Included	Included	Included in 3 of 4 OHL packages
Replacement of existing earthwires, downleads and down droppers	Not included	Included	Included	Included	Included in 3 of 4 OHL packages
Gantry refurbishment	Not included	Included	Not included	Included	Included in 2 of 4 OHL packages
Muffs (concrete caps)	Included	Not included	Not included	Not included	Included in 1 of 4 OHL packages

Cable Works

4.13 The two cable work packages comprise a common scope of works including replacement of cables, sealing end terminations, gantry and switchgear. These activities are common across the following elements:

4.13.1 West Burton Cable Works, and

4.13.2 Ratcliffe-on-Soar Cable Works

4.14 The common cable works component parts of the Project are indicated below in the table and explained in further detail in William Kirby and Emma Naylor's statement which focuses on Engineering matters. Components not included in the table below are not required to be upgraded as part of the Project scope:

Component / Work Item	West Burton Cable Works	Ratcliffe-on-Soar Cable Works	Commonality
Replacement of existing oil-filled cable with new Cable Sealing End terminations and new gantry	Included	Included	Included in 2 of 2 cable packages
New Cable Sealing End terminations	Included	Included	Included in 2 of 2 cable packages
New gantry	Included	Included	Included in 2 of 2 cable packages
Extension and replacement of existing cable sealing end compound fencing	Included	Not included	Included in 1 of 2 cable packages
Installation of new switchgear, including earth switches, surge arrestors and post insulators	Included	Not included	Included in 1 of 2 cable packages

Maintenance Works

4.15 All of the existing infrastructure included as part of the Project requires ongoing maintenance works to maintain the asset health of the infrastructure and ensure a reliable and safe supply of electricity. As part of the Project, NGET have therefore sought permanent rights over all the existing infrastructure across these overhead line networks via the Order, to ensure this maintenance can be undertaken with consistent and sufficient rights. Examples of the type of maintenance that would be required to be undertaken would include the repairing of existing cables/overhead lines and accessories such as earth tape/property plates.

National Grid Electricity Distribution plc ("NGED") Works

4.16 NGET requires mechanical protection for any infrastructure or assets located beneath the overhead line during the OHL Works.

4.17 NGED owns and operates a significant number of High Voltage, and Low Voltage overhead assets that intersect with NGET's 400 kV transmission lines. To mitigate the risk

of electrocution or asset damage, these assets will be replaced with underground alternatives where necessary. NGED has been contracted under an engineering, procurement and construction ("**EPC**") arrangement to deliver undergrounding works for their overhead line network at intersecting points across the Project. However, in the event that NGED cannot deliver these undergrounding works in all locations, apart from the instance referred to below, a mechanical section solution (such as scaffolding) can be adopted by NGET in order to deliver the Project works.

- 4.18 The crossing where a mechanical solution cannot be achieved is between ZDF53 and ZDF54 on the Stoke Bardolph – High Marnham circuit crossing Main Road, Averham (adjacent to the A617). This crossing will, therefore, require the installation of three new 11kV overhead line wood poles with associated stay wires, installation of a new three-way 11kV Underground cable between the three poles and removal of the overhead conductor and poles, in order for NGET to carry out the OHL Works as part of the Project.
- 4.19 As part of the EPC arrangement, NGET has agreed that NGED will deliver these works to enable NGET to carry out the OHL Works forming part of the Project. NGED will seek any necessary consents required for these works and is seeking voluntary agreements to undertake the works and to maintain the asset once it has been diverted. If a voluntary agreement cannot be reached between NGED and the landowner for these works and given that no alternative mechanical solution is feasible at this location, NGET has included the land required for these works within the Order Land as a fallback, to avoid any impediment to the delivery of the Project. As NGET cannot acquire land rights on behalf of another statutory undertaker such as NGED, NGET is seeking freehold acquisition of this area. This approach enables NGET to subsequently transfer the necessary rights to NGED once the freehold land has been acquired.

Construction Compounds, Vegetation clearance and Accesses

- 4.20 Construction compounds, vegetation clearance and accesses to each of the towers/access to crossing protection areas (e.g. scaffolding areas either side of the road) along the overhead lines are required to enable the construction, maintenance and decommissioning of the OHL Works. The construction compounds and accesses to each of the towers are shown on the Order Maps.

5. ALTERNATIVES TO THE PROJECT

- 5.1 The following options were considered in developing the detailed proposals for the Project whilst minimising environmental and community impacts but ensuring deliverability and value for consumers.

Do Nothing

- 5.2 Taking no action is not an alternative given the urgent and compelling need to refurbish this existing infrastructure as set out in Section 6 of this Statement of Evidence.

Alternatives to the Project - Options Appraisal

- 5.3 The options appraisal concluded that various solutions were available. These were narrowed down to a smaller set of credible options, with the remainder ruled out for technical or practical reasons and because they did not meet the core investment drivers, which are to safely increase network capability, enable new renewable generation to connect, and reduce long-term constraint costs. The Project considered the following three credible options via a detailed assessment:

- 5.3.1 Option 1 (the Project) - Reconductoring the existing overhead lines with the largest feasible conductor type that can be safely installed on the existing tower structures.
- 5.3.2 Option 2 - An alternative reconductoring approach with different conductor technology (e.g., high-capacity, low-sag conductors).
- 5.3.3 Option 3 - A variation combining reconductoring with other minor asset health interventions.

- 5.4 The detailed assessment concluded that Option 1 (the **"Project"**) should be selected as it: meets the technical need to increase power flow out of the High Marnham area; supports future renewable generation and regional electricity growth; and avoids unnecessary new infrastructure, keeping environmental and land impacts to a minimum. Option 1 (the **"Project"**) is also the most efficient and cost-effective solution for consumers and can be constructed within the short outage windows that the electricity network in this location requires.

Alternatives to acquisition over specific parcels

- 5.5 Alternatives to the acquisition of rights sought over particular parcels of land are addressed in the Statement of Evidence of Mr Harper (**NGET/DH/1**). He concludes the rights sought are reasonably required and there is no lesser alternative that meets NGET's objectives.

6. THE NEED FOR THE PROJECT

- 6.1 NGET has a statutory duty under section 9 of the Electricity Act 1989 (**CD, A04**) to develop and maintain an efficient, coordinated and economical system of electricity transmission. The Project is required to fulfil that duty. The existing transmission circuits in this area form an important part of the national electricity transmission network, carrying electricity from areas of generation to centres of demand. Without reinforcement, these circuits would increasingly constrain the movement of power across the network and limit the ability of the system to accommodate future electricity generation and demand.
- 6.2 The existing transmission future network in this area was not designed to accommodate the forecast scale and direction of power flows and, without reinforcement, would increasingly constrain the efficient operation of the national electricity system.
- 6.3 The need for the Project arises from the significant transformation currently underway within the UK's energy system. The transition to a low-carbon economy, the growth of renewable energy generation, and increasing electrification of transport, heating and industry are driving unprecedented demand for transmission network capacity. National forecasts prepared by the National Energy System Operator ("**NESO**") demonstrate that substantially greater volumes of electricity will need to be transported across the country over the coming decades than the existing network was originally designed to accommodate.
- 6.4 The Project has been identified as a necessary reinforcement to address forecast constraints on the transmission system, particularly across the B7a and B8 network boundaries. These constraints restrict the amount of electricity that can be transferred from areas of generation in northern England and Scotland to areas of demand further south. If those constraints are not addressed, increasing quantities of renewable electricity generation will be unable to be transported efficiently across the network, resulting in higher system costs, reduced network efficiency and impacts on consumers.
- 6.5 A key benefit of the Project is that it increases the transfer capability of the existing network by uprating and refurbishing existing infrastructure rather than constructing entirely new transmission routes. By replacing ageing conductors and associated equipment with higher-capacity assets, National Grid can achieve a significant increase in network capability while making use of existing transmission corridors. This approach represents an efficient use of existing infrastructure, minimises environmental impacts and provides good value for consumers.
- 6.6 The Project is also necessary to facilitate a number of contracted customer connections. These include major electricity generation, storage and demand projects planned within the High Marnham and Stoke Bardolph areas. Such projects form an important part of the UK's transition to cleaner and more secure sources of energy. Without the additional network capacity created by the Project, those customer connections would face delays or restrictions, preventing generation and storage assets from connecting to the national electricity system when required.
- 6.7 In addition to its direct benefits, the Project is an enabling component of wider strategic transmission reinforcement planned across the country. In particular, it supports the

delivery of other Accelerated Strategic Transmission Investment ("**ASTI**") schemes, including the Chesterfield to High Marnham ASTI project which is a major NGET scheme to upgrade existing 275 kilovolts ("**kV**") overhead electric lines to 400kV to transport more clean energy across the UK. These nationally significant infrastructure projects are intended to deliver the transmission infrastructure required to meet the Government's Clean Power and Net Zero ambitions as set out in national energy policy detailed within section 4.16 of the Statement of Case (**CD, C08**). The full benefits of those wider investments cannot be realised unless power can continue to be transported away from the High Marnham area through the circuits which form part of this Project.

- 6.8 The Project is also required on asset health grounds. Parts of the existing infrastructure have reached a point where refurbishment and replacement are necessary to maintain long-term reliability and operational resilience. The works will replace ageing conductors, fittings and steelwork and address identified asset condition issues. The Project therefore not only provides additional transmission capability but also secures the safe and reliable operation of this existing strategic infrastructure for future decades.
- 6.9 Without the Project, transmission constraints would continue to increase, future customer connections would be delayed or restricted, wider strategic reinforcement projects would not achieve their intended benefits and the long-term condition of existing assets would continue to deteriorate. The Project is therefore necessary to enable National Grid to fulfil its statutory duty to develop and maintain an efficient, coordinated and economical transmission system.
- 6.10 These factors demonstrate that the Project is not discretionary or speculative. It responds to clearly identified network needs, supports nationally important energy policy objectives, enables future generation and storage connections, provides resilience and reliability benefits, and contributes directly to the delivery of the UK's clean energy ambitions. In my opinion, the need for the Project is both compelling and urgent.
- 6.11 Accordingly, when balancing the limited private impacts against the significant national, regional and local benefits and need for the Project, there is, in my view, a compelling case in the public interest for the acquisition of the land and rights required to enable the Project to proceed. Further policy supporting this needs case is provided within Section 4 of the Statement of Case (**CD, C08**) and the Statement of Evidence of Mr Jarvis (**NGET/JP/1**).

7. **BENEFITS OF THE PROJECT**

- 7.1 The public benefits arising from the Project are substantial. The Project will increase network capacity, support renewable generation, facilitate customer connections, reduce transmission constraints, improve energy security and maintain the reliability of critical national infrastructure. These benefits extend well beyond the local area and will be realised across the electricity system as a whole and are summarised below in key categories.

Increased Transmission Capacity

- 7.2 The Project will significantly increase the capability of the existing transmission network by uprating approximately 106 kilometres of existing 400kV circuits. Uprating increases the capacity of the electricity network. This additional capacity will allow greater volumes of electricity to be transferred across the network and will help ensure the transmission system is capable of accommodating future generation and demand requirements.

Reduced Network Constraints and Consumer Cost

- 7.3 By increasing network capacity and relieving existing bottlenecks, the Project will reduce the extent to which electricity generation is constrained from operating, allowing it to meet the current and future energy demands. This will improve the overall efficiency of the transmission system and help reduce constraint costs that would otherwise be borne by electricity consumers. The Project therefore delivers both operational and economic benefits at a national level.

Supporting Clean Energy and Net Zero Objectives

- 7.4 The Project will facilitate the connection and operation of renewable energy generation and energy storage projects. In doing so, it supports national objectives for Clean Power, Net Zero and energy system decarbonisation. The reinforcement of existing transmission infrastructure is a critical component of enabling the transition from fossil-fuel-based generation towards a cleaner and more sustainable energy system.

Enabling Customer Connections

- 7.5 The Project directly supports the connection of major customer projects, including renewable generation, battery energy storage systems and significant demand connections. These developments contribute to energy security, economic investment and the future resilience of the electricity system. Delivery of the Project ensures that sufficient transmission capacity is available to accommodate these connections when required.

Supporting Wider Strategic Investment

- 7.6 The Project provides benefits beyond its immediate geographic area by enabling the successful delivery of wider ASTI reinforcement schemes. By increasing power transfer capability from the High Marnham area, the Project ensures that future strategic investments can operate as intended and deliver their full system-wide benefits.

Improved Reliability and Asset Resilience

- 7.7 NGET is charged with delivering a safe and secure electricity transmission network. Replacement of the asset at this time will deliver energy security and certainty of supply. It will reduce the risk of intermittent interruption of supply.
- 7.8 The replacement and refurbishment of ageing infrastructure will improve the reliability, resilience and operational performance of the transmission network. New conductors, upgraded equipment and structural improvements will reduce operational risk, extend asset life and support the continued safe operation of the network for decades to come.

Efficient Use of Existing Infrastructure

- 7.9 A particular benefit of the Project is that it achieves substantial increases in transmission capacity largely within an existing transmission corridor and using established infrastructure. The works avoid the need for substantial new overhead line routes, thereby minimising environmental effects, reducing land take and providing a cost-effective solution for consumers.

Overall Public Benefit

- 7.10 In summary, the Project will deliver enhanced network capability, facilitate new generation and storage connections, support UK energy policy objectives, maintain reliable electricity supplies and improve the condition of strategic transmission assets. These benefits extend well beyond the Order Land and will be realised across the wider electricity system, businesses and consumers throughout Great Britain.

8. HOW THE PROJECT WILL BE DELIVERED AND FUNDED

Delivery

- 8.1 In my experience, NGET has an excellent track record in delivering infrastructure projects and has an excellent financial standing as explained below.
- 8.2 NGET has extensive experience of building, operating and maintaining linear infrastructure schemes including overhead electricity systems, underground cables and substations.
- 8.3 Notably, NGET has delivered the existing assets which are being refurbished as part this Project as well as numerous other refurbishment projects such as the Penwortham to Daines refurbishment project and the West Yorkshire overhead line reconductoring project. NGET has also delivered the following projects which I have worked on as Senior Project Manager: Peak District East Visual Impact Provision (**VIP**) and Hartlepool – West Bolden Circuit (**ZZA**) turn in at Hawthorn Pit (**WHT1**). NGET is also making significant progress on

the ASTI schemes, such as Chesterfield to Willington (**EDN2**) for which I am the Project Director.

- 8.4 NGET has been utilising an Early Contractor Involvement contracting strategy for development and undertaking of the initial construction works. The physical work commenced with early construction activities allowed by permitted development rights under the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 ("**PD Rights**") (**CD, A12**) and works permitted under the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991 ("**NRSA Rights**") (**CD, A05**).
- 8.5 These works have comprised of surveys, vegetation clearance and mobilising a compound for site operations. These early works commenced in Q1 2026 and until 9th July 2026 were ongoing. On the 9th July 2026 it was confirmed by NESO that the outage associated with the 2026 works, planned specifically for the 2026 works on WRRE, has been cancelled due to voltage issues and a clash with another urgent outage.
- 8.6 Therefore, the works have been re-programmed as per the summary below:

WRRE

- 8.6.1 November 2026 - Site mobilisation,
- 8.6.2 December 2026 - Site enabling and pre-outage works start,
- 8.6.3 March to August 2027 - West Burton to High Marnham circuit outage to facilitate cable replacement at West Burton and steelwork replacement along the OHL route) and High Marnham to Stoke Bardolph outage to facilitate OHL reconductoring,
- 8.6.4 January 2028 - Site mobilisation,
- 8.6.5 January 2028 - Site enabling and pre-outage works start,
- 8.6.6 March to August 2028 - Ratcliffe-on-Soar to Stoke Bardolph circuit outage to facilitate underground cable replacement at Ratcliffe and OHL reconductoring.

SCORE

- 8.6.7 July 2027 - Site mobilisation,
- 8.6.8 July 2027 - Site enabling and pre-outage works start,
- 8.6.9 August - November 2027 - Cottam to Staythorpe circuit outage to facilitate OHL reconductoring plus two disconnectors replacement at Cottam and two disconnectors replacement at Staythorpe.
- 8.7 As can be seen from the dates provided and referred to above, NGET was initially planning to commence the works in 2026 in order to meet the planned Project construction end date and initial Outage dates provided by NESO, however this strategy has now changed due to the outage being cancelled. Due to the re-sequencing of the works associated with the cancelled 2026 outage, this has been rescheduled to 2028 and will have no effect on the overall construction end date.
- 8.8 NGET is proposing to deliver these works under either existing land rights or new voluntary agreements. NGET is however maintaining the land required for all of the Project works in the event that voluntary agreement for these works is not reached and to ensure the full suite of maintenance rights required for the Project are available in perpetuity.

Procurement of the Works

- 8.9 The works have been procured via the Great Grid Partnership ("**GGP**") Framework. The GGP is National Grid's enterprise delivery model for major transmission infrastructure projects within the Great Grid Upgrade programme. Established in 2024, the GGP brings National Grid and its strategic design, consenting and construction partners together under a collaborative framework founded on the Institute of Civil Engineers Project 13 principles. The purpose of the GGP is to increase delivery capability, improve efficiency, promote innovation and facilitate earlier integration of design, environmental, planning and construction activities. This supports the timely delivery of critical electricity infrastructure

required to meet national energy policy objectives, including the reinforcement projects proposed as part of WRRE and SCRE.

- 8.10 The procurement process for the Project has led to contracts being awarded for design and construction activities for all elements of the project, including Cable and OHL design and construction of all works.
- 8.11 Overall, subject to acquiring the necessary land interests it requires for the Project, NGET will be in a position to proceed with the delivery of the Project to meet the Project delivery date of Q4 2028.

Funding

- 8.12 NGET is responsible for developing, constructing, and financing the Project. It is also responsible for the payment of compensation for the acquisition of land and rights required for the Project whether pursuant to a voluntary agreement or the Compensation Code.
- 8.13 NGET expects to recover efficient costs through Ofgem's Project Assessment and subsequent Final Determinations. Compulsory acquisition will only be exercised with adequate funding in place at the time the rights are required for construction, consistent with CPO Guidance (**CD, B18**).
- 8.14 Given NGET's strong credit rating, the requisite funding will be available to meet the implementation and land acquisition/compulsory purchase compensation costs associated with the Project as and when required (including any advance payments and compensation for blight). This is also my experience of funding on the many projects I have worked on such as the Dinorwig to Pentir Cable Replacement Project.
- 8.15 Accordingly, NGET considers that the criteria in paragraph 14 of the CPO Guidance are satisfied.
- 8.16 This Project will be funded through National Grid's regulated investment framework. Following regulatory assessment and approval, Ofgem can provide the funding allowances required to deliver the reinforcement.
- 8.17 Ofgem's regulatory framework is known as RIIO (Revenue = Incentives + Innovation + Outputs). The RIIO model offers network companies incentives for innovation and securing investment, so they can develop sustainable energy networks at the lowest cost for current and future customers. The third iteration of the RIIO model, known as RIIO-Electricity Transmission 3 (or RIIO ET3) commenced on 1 April 2026 following Ofgem's approval of NGET's baseline allowances.
- 8.18 Funding for the Project is sought through Ofgem's RIIO-ET3 Load Related Re-opener framework, which is designed to fund major transmission investments that were not included in baseline allowances but which have become necessary to meet changing network requirements.
- 8.19 For this Project, the investment case is being progressed through the regulatory assessment process with Ofgem; including relevant regulatory submission windows. The Project has been identified as an important reinforcement that increases transfer capability on the transmission network, reduces future constraint costs for consumers and supports delivery of wider network upgrades required to meet future electricity demand and net-zero objectives.
- 8.20 The current funding position allows the Project to both acquire the land/rights and to deliver the Project based on the established route alignment. The Project has an early contractor involvement model in place and main works contracts have now been awarded. All costs for the works have been received and approved by NGET and the Project has internal funding allocated.
- 8.21 It is noteworthy that no objector to the Order has suggested that NGET will not have the necessary resources or capacity to fund and deliver the Project.
- 8.22 In light of the above, the Secretary of State can be satisfied that all aspects of the Project would be fully funded and there is no reason to consider that, should the Order be confirmed, the Project would not be able to be delivered due to either an absence or

shortfall of funding. The Secretary of State can also be satisfied that funding will be available for the acquisition of any land or interest required for the Project, for any compensation or blight claims brought by those with an interest in the land affected by the Order, and for the costs of implementing the Project.

- 8.23 In addition, NGET has carried out an assessment of the compensation that it expects will arise as a result of the acquisition of the rights and the land included within the Order. NGET has taken expert advice on the likely costs of implementing the Project, including the funding of the acquisition of the interests in land set out within the Order. Therefore, NGET is confident that land acquisition costs and potential compensation claims can be fully met when required under the Order and this would include any "early payments" under the blight provisions of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

9. GEMA CONSENT

- 9.1 Paragraph 2 of Schedule 3 to the Electricity Act 1989 provides that no compulsory purchase order may be made authorising the compulsory purchase of land belonging to another licence holder except with the consent of the Gas and Electricity Markets Authority ("**GEMA**"). NGET has made two applications asking the Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero to seek the consent of GEMA: the first, dated 15 May 2026, in relation to non-operational land owned by EDF Energy (Thermal Generation) Limited; and the second, dated 12 June 2026, in relation to non-operational land owned by Uniper UK Limited. In both cases, the relevant land falls outside the extent of the respective licence holder's operational land and is not used for the purposes of an installation necessary for the carrying on of licensed activities, such that the statutory bar on GEMA giving consent under paragraph 2(2) of Schedule 3 does not apply.
- 9.2 NGET has also identified certain plots within the Order that comprise operational land owned by licence holders and will be submitting proposed modifications to the Order so that it would not authorise the compulsory acquisition of interests in those plots.
- 9.3 There are also licence holders who hold rights in the Order Land, however, as the Order does not propose to acquire or interfere with those interests, GEMA consent is not required.
- 9.4 A full explanation of the applications for GEMA consent is set out in the note entitled "Applications for Consent Pursuant to Paragraph 2, Schedule 3, Electricity Act 1989," which is appended to this statement at **LE01 (NGET/LE/2)** and which has been prepared by NGET's legal advisors, Herbert Smith Freehills Kramer LLP.

10. RESPONSE TO THE OBJECTIONS

- 10.1 The period for submissions of any objections to the Order initially expired on 19 March 2026. The period was extended to 31 March 2026 as interests in land were identified following the Order being made on 12 February 2026. By this date, 23 objections had been made to the Secretary of State.
- 10.2 NGET has responded to each objector individually in writing and remains committed to reaching an agreed position with each objector.
- 10.3 The table below provides responses raised by objectors which relate to this Statement of Evidence. All other elements of the objection responses which relate to lands and engineering matters are provided within the statements of Mr Harper (**NGET/DH/1**) and Mr Kirby (**NGET/WL/1**).

Objector/OBJ reference	Objection Summary	Response
Network Rail Infrastructure Limited OBJ2 (formerly OBJ15)	The Objector objects to the Order on the grounds that the Order adversely affects operational railway	NGET has entered into a basic asset protection agreement with the Objector, and is currently negotiating both an easement and additional side agreement

Objector/OBJ reference	Objection Summary	Response
as in the Statement of Case (CD, C08))	land. Network Rail reserves the right to produce additional grounds of objection as further details become available. Network Rail has also made representations to the Railways Directorate of the Department for Transport under section 16 and Schedule 3 Part II of the Acquisition of Land Act 1981.	and considers that agreement should be reached shortly.
Mr and Mrs EM Astley Arlington as Trustees of The Gladwell Trust, The Rathbone Trust and The Tufnell Trust; Arlington Farming Limited; and MFP OBJ12 (formerly OBJ2 as in the Statement of Case)	Point 2 of objection- The Objectors contend that the compulsory acquisition of rights over the Plots is unsupported by a compelling case in the public interest.	NGET does not accept that the compulsory acquisition of rights is unsupported by a compelling case in the public interest. As set out within this Statement, the Project is necessary to ensure the continued safe and reliable operation of the electricity transmission network, supports and to relieve the network constraint due to the forecasted volume of new generation projects. The Project is also an enabler to the delivery of other NGET ASTI projects. The Project also supports Clean Energy and Net Zero Objectives and improves asset resilience and reliability across the network. NGET's position remains that the rights sought under the Order are reasonably necessary for the purposes of the Project and that the project is justified and urgently needed for the reasons set out within this Statement.
Elements Green Trent Limited – OBJ19 (formerly OBJ7 as in the Statement of Case)	Point 1 of Objection- GEMA Consent: The Objector contends that the consent of GEMA is required pursuant to paragraph 2 of Schedule 3 to the Electricity Act 1989, in circumstances where the Order affects land belonging to another electricity licence holder. The Objector also notes that it holds a generation licence.	NGET's position in relation to the need for GEMA consent is set out in the note appended to this Statement at LE01 (NGET/LE/2) . Elements Green holds rights in the Order Land, however, the Order does not propose to acquire or interfere with those interests, meaning that GEMA consent is not required.

Objector/OBJ reference	Objection Summary	Response
Exolum Pipeline System Ltd – OBJ1 (formerly OBJ8 as in the Statement of Case)	The Objector is concerned regarding the potential impact of the Project upon Exolum's high-pressure oil pipeline apparatus and the associated statutory and regulatory obligations. In particular, the Objector requests that protective provisions be included to safeguard its pipeline assets throughout the duration of the Project.	NGET has had several meetings with the Objector in respect of the Project to discuss the precise location of the pipeline within the Order Land and the Project works to be undertaken in that location. NGET is in negotiations with the Objector with a view to agreeing an appropriate asset protection agreement to safeguard Exolum's pipeline assets throughout the duration of the Project.
J G Pears Group Companies (including J G Pears Property Limited) – OBJ21 (formerly OBJ11 as in the Statement of Case)	Point 5- Engagement and consultation: The Objector contends that NGET has failed to engage adequately with the Objector and that the Project has not been subject to a requisite level of consultation.	NGET does not accept that it has failed to engage adequately with the Objector. We do not generally undertake public consultation events for reconductoring projects. NGET has corresponded with the Objector on multiple occasions since September 2024, held numerous face to face meetings with them since 2024 and had various site meetings, including one on 28 April 2026. We have reached agreement and signed Heads of Terms on a provisional agreement for the voluntary acquisition of permanent land rights. NGET remains willing to engage with the Objector and its representatives with a view to reaching a voluntary agreement.

10.4 NGET is working with the objectors to better understand their specific concerns and explore opportunities to remove or mitigate these concerns. In summary, notwithstanding the objections raised in respect of this Project, I consider that there is an urgent need to deliver the Project to achieve the important benefits outlined within this Statement and therefore a compelling case in the public interest for this Order to be confirmed.

11. HUMAN RIGHTS AND EQUALITY ACT CONSIDERATIONS

11.1 As explained in the Statement of Evidence of Mr Harper (**NGET/DH/1**), all of the land and rights in the Order Land are required either for the purposes of the Project, or to facilitate, mitigate, or is incidental to the Project.

11.2 NGET is taking a proportionate approach to compulsory acquisition and, rather than seeking to acquire the freehold title to all of the Order Land, is seeking to acquire small areas of freehold title (for the NGED works and substation areas) and permanent rights.

11.3 Notwithstanding the efforts that have been made to acquire interests in the land by way of voluntary agreement, as at the date of making the Order, NGET has been unable to secure all of the requisite interests through negotiation. It is therefore necessary to seek compulsory powers to enable the delivery of the Project. However, negotiations to acquire interests by private treaty will continue in parallel with the compulsory purchase order process.

Human Rights

- 11.4 With regards to Human Rights, I am advised that section 6 of the Human Rights Act 1998 prohibits public authorities from acting in a way which is incompatible with rights protected by the European Convention on Human Rights (the "**Convention**"). The position is summarised in paragraph 2 of the General Overview of the Government Compulsory Purchase Process Guidance (the "**CPO Guidance**" (**CD, B18**)), which states that acquiring authorities should use compulsory purchase powers where there is "*a compelling case in the public interest.*" The CPO Guidance makes it clear that an acquiring authority should be sure that the purposes for which it is seeking compulsory acquisition powers sufficiently justify interfering with the human rights of those with an interest in the land affected. In making this assessment, an acquiring authority should have regard, in particular, to the provisions of Article 1 of the First Protocol to the Convention, and in the case of dwelling, Article 8.
- 11.5 Article 1 of the First Protocol states that:
"...Every natural or legal person is entitled to peaceful enjoyment of his possessions" and "no one shall be deprived of his possessions except in the public interest and subject to the conditions provided for by the law and by the general principles of international law..."
- 11.6 Article 8 of the Convention states that:
"Everyone has the right to respect for his private and family life, his home and his correspondence" and that this right should not be interfered with "except such as is in accordance with the law and is necessary in a democratic society in the interests of national security, public safety or the economic well-being of the country, for the prevention of disorder or crime, for the protection of health or morals, or for the protection of the rights and freedoms of others."
- 11.7 Whilst owners and occupiers of the Order Land may be deprived of their property/interest in property if the Order is confirmed, or have that interest interfered with, I am advised that this will be in accordance with the law. NGET is only seeking the acquisition of the freehold and permanent rights over the Order Land where necessary. The Order is being promoted in the public interest and the public benefits have been set out in detail earlier in this Statement. NGET considers that the Order will strike the right balance between the public interest in the implementation of the Project and those private rights that will be affected by the Order.
- 11.8 Article 6 of the Convention provides that: *"In determining his civil rights and obligations... everyone is entitled to a fair and public hearing within a reasonable time by an independent and impartial tribunal established by law."*
- 11.9 The Order has been publicised and engagement has taken place with those impacted by the Project and key stakeholders in the region. All those affected by the Order have been notified and may have the opportunity to make representations to the Secretary of State and to be heard at a public inquiry before a decision is made as to whether or not the Order should be confirmed, and, I understand, would in any event have legal rights under the 1981 Act to challenge any order made on the relevant statutory grounds. It has been held by the courts that statutory processes are in compliance with Article 6 of the Convention.
- 11.10 Those whose interests are acquired under the Order will also be entitled to compensation which will be payable in accordance with the Compulsory Purchase Compensation Code. I am advised that the Compensation Code has been held to be compliant with Article 8 and Article 1 of the First Protocol to the Convention.
- 11.11 NGET has sought to keep any interference with the rights of those with interests in the Order Land to a minimum. The land within the Order has been limited to the minimum required for the Project infrastructure to be installed, operated, maintained and decommissioned.
- 11.12 NGET is satisfied that there are no planning, financial or other impediments to the implementation of the Project and that the Project is therefore likely to proceed if the Order is confirmed.

- 11.13 The requirements of the Human Rights Act 1998 and the Convention, particularly the rights of property owners, have therefore been fully taken into account. There is a compelling case in the public interest for the Order to be made and confirmed, and the interference with the private rights of those affected that would be the inevitable result of the exercise of compulsory purchase powers conferred by the Order would be lawful, justified and proportionate.

Equality Act

- 11.14 NGET has, as a non-public body exercising public functions, had regard to the public sector equality duty set out in s149(1) of the Equality Act 2010 (the "**Equality Act**") and has, in promoting the Order, and has undertaken consultation and a landowner engagement exercise.
- 11.15 NGET does not currently consider that the Project will give rise to any impacts or differential/disproportionate impacts on persons who share a relevant protected characteristic as defined in the Equality Act, or upon persons who do not share such relevant protected characteristic. No objector to the Order has suggested otherwise. However, the engagement process is ongoing and NGET's position will be continually monitored, and should any persons with protected characteristics be identified who may be adversely impacted by the Project, packages of assistance measures will be put in place, as necessary, so as to mitigate, so far as practicable, any identified activity that may have an adverse impact on these individuals.

12. CONCLUSIONS

- 12.1 I was appointed by NGET as a Project Director and am giving evidence on behalf of NGET in respect of the overarching case for the Project and the Order. I have had particular regard to the key aspects of the CPO Guidance that are relevant to my evidence.
- 12.2 It is my opinion that there is a clear, compelling and urgent need for the Project. The Project is required to ensure that the electricity transmission network continues to operate safely, efficiently and reliably whilst accommodating the substantial increase in electricity generation, storage and demand expected over the coming years. The existing infrastructure no longer provides sufficient capability to meet future network requirements and, without reinforcement, increasingly significant transmission constraints would arise, limiting the ability of the network to transport electricity where it is needed.
- 12.3 A 'do nothing' option is neither reasonable nor feasible because it would fail to address the identified network constraints, prevent the timely connection of new generation, storage and demand customers, undermine the delivery of wider strategic transmission reinforcements, and leave existing assets operating beyond their optimum capability. Without the Project, National Grid would be unable to provide the additional transmission capacity required to support future electricity flows or fully discharge its statutory duty to develop and maintain an efficient, coordinated and economical transmission system. The Project is therefore necessary to ensure a secure, reliable and resilient electricity network capable of meeting future energy needs.
- 12.4 In light of the above, additional land and rights are sought by NGET in the CPO to allow the refurbishment of the existing asset in the most efficient manner possible. NGET will need to maintain supply to existing customers, accommodate new connections whilst reinforcing the network in the medium to long term and maintaining its assets.
- 12.5 In my opinion, the need for the Project has been comprehensively demonstrated through the technical, operational and strategic assessments undertaken by National Grid and NESO. Those assessments have identified a clear requirement to increase transmission capacity, relieve forecast network constraints, facilitate contracted customer connections, support wider strategic network reinforcements and maintain the reliability of existing transmission assets. The extensive engineering, network planning and project development work undertaken provides compelling evidence that the Project is both necessary and deliverable, and that its timely implementation is essential to support the future operation of an efficient, coordinated and resilient electricity transmission network.

- 12.6 In my statement of evidence, I have also set out the funding and delivery position in respect of the Project. I conclude that there is an urgent need for the Project and that the Project meets that need for the Project and achieves the primary objective.
- 12.7 On the basis of my evidence, and the other evidence presented to the Inquiry on behalf of NGET I respectfully ask the Inspector to recommend to the Secretary of State that the CPO for the Project be confirmed in this case.

13. **DECLARATION**

I confirm that the opinions expressed in this proof of evidence are my true and professional opinions. I confirm that I have understood and complied with my duty to the Inquiry as an Expert Witness and have provided my evidence impartially and objectively. I confirm that I have no conflicts of interest.

Signed

Leanne Evans

24.07.2026