

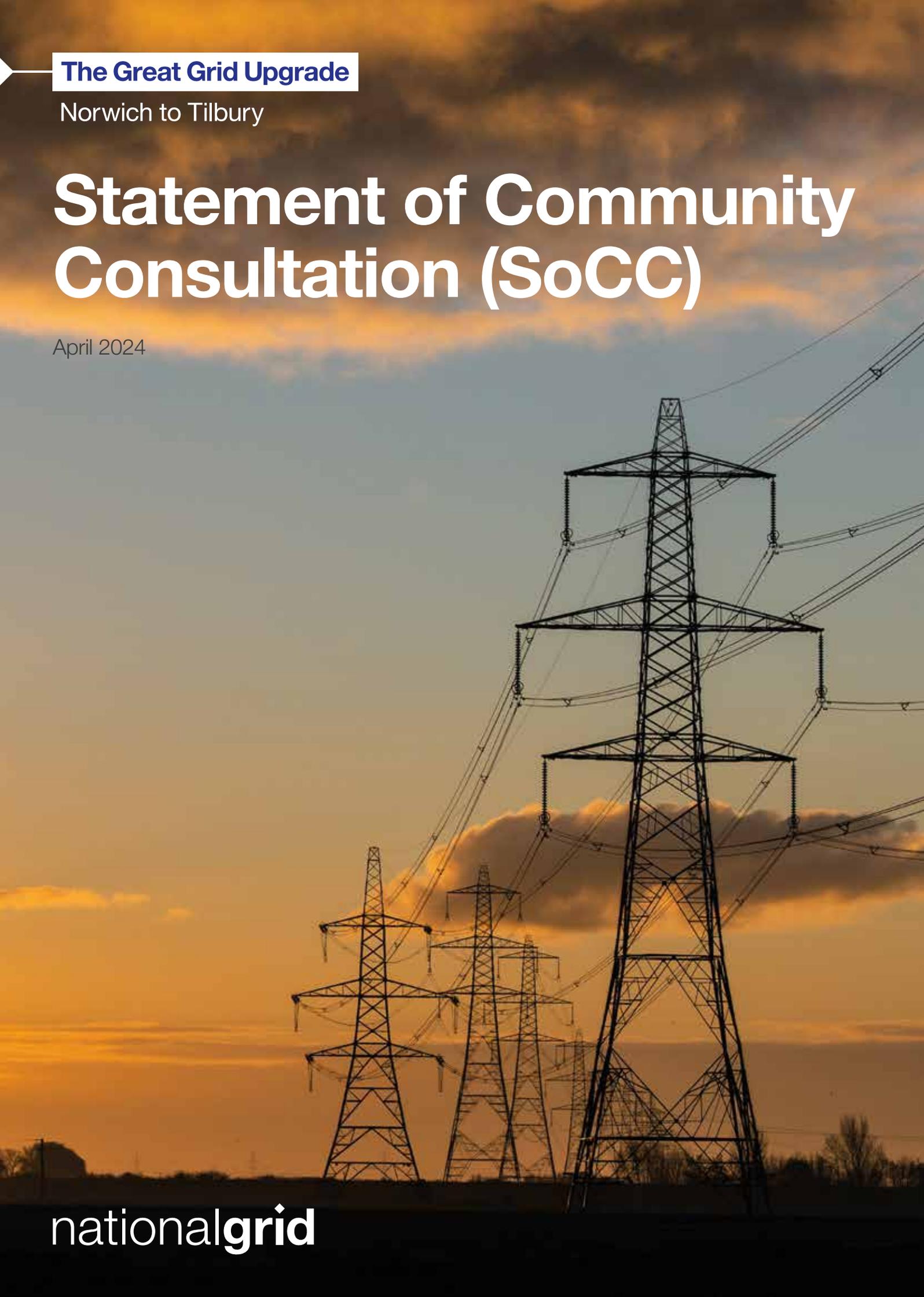
The Great Grid Upgrade

Norwich to Tilbury

Statement of Community Consultation (SoCC)

April 2024

nationalgrid

The background of the entire page is a photograph of several high-voltage electricity pylons and power lines stretching across a landscape. The scene is captured during sunset or sunrise, with the sky showing warm orange and yellow tones near the horizon, transitioning to a darker blue at the top. The pylons are silhouetted against the bright sky, creating a strong geometric pattern. The power lines are visible as thin, dark lines crisscrossing the frame.

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1. Introduction

1.1. Purpose of the document

- 1.1.1. This document is a Statement of Community Consultation ("SoCC") which sets out how National Grid Electricity Transmission plc ("National Grid") intends to consult statutory consultees, stakeholders, affected residents, businesses and local communities ahead of its application for development consent for the Norwich to Tilbury Project (referred to here as the proposed "Project"). National Grid proposes to provide a new link to the transmission system by upgrading and reinforcing the electricity transmission system in East Anglia (Norfolk, Suffolk and Essex specifically).
- 1.1.2. National Grid expects the proposed Project to be classified as a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project ("NSIP") and requires consent from the Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero (the "SoS") via a Development Consent Order ("DCO"). This document has been prepared in line with Section 47(1) of the Planning Act 2008 ("the Planning Act"), which requires applicants to prepare a statement explaining how they will consult with people living in the vicinity of the land where the Project is proposed to be located, from here called "the local community" about the proposed application, and to carry out pre-application consultation in accordance with this statement. As the proposed Project is an Environmental Impact Assessment ("EIA") development, this SoCC therefore also sets out how National Grid intends to publicise and consult on the preliminary environmental information, in accordance with regulation 12 of the Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 ("the EIA Regulations").
- 1.1.3. In developing the SoCC, we consulted with and had regard to comments from the following local authorities:
- **Norfolk County Council**
 - **Suffolk County Council**
 - **Essex County Council**
 - **Thurrock Council**
 - **South Norfolk District Council**
 - **Mid Suffolk District Council**
 - **Babergh District Council**
 - **Tendring District Council**
 - **Colchester City Council**
 - **Braintree District Council**
 - **Chelmsford City Council**
 - **Brentwood Borough Council**
 - **Basildon Borough Council.**

1.2. Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects

- 1.2.1. The proposed Project is expected to be classified as an NSIP under Section 14(1)(b) and Section 16(1)(a) of the Planning Act because it comprises new above ground electricity transmission connections of more than 2 km, with an operating voltage of above 132 kilovolt (“kV”). National Grid intends to submit an application for a DCO to the Planning Inspectorate under Section 37 of the Planning Act.
- 1.2.2. The application for a DCO will be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate, who appoints an Examining Authority to examine the application on behalf of the SoS. The Examining Authority will provide a recommendation to the SoS, who will ultimately decide whether to grant development consent for the proposed Project.
- 1.2.3. Before submitting an application, the Planning Act requires us to carry out consultation with people living in the vicinity of the land where the Project is proposed to be located and prescribed stakeholders.
- 1.2.4. Early involvement of communities, local authorities and other stakeholders helps to ensure we identify valuable information about the potential effects of the proposed Project, where feedback from consultees can help shape the Project’s development.
- 1.2.5. Early involvement also ensures that potential mitigation measures can be considered and, where appropriate, built into our designs before an application for a DCO is submitted.

1.3. Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)

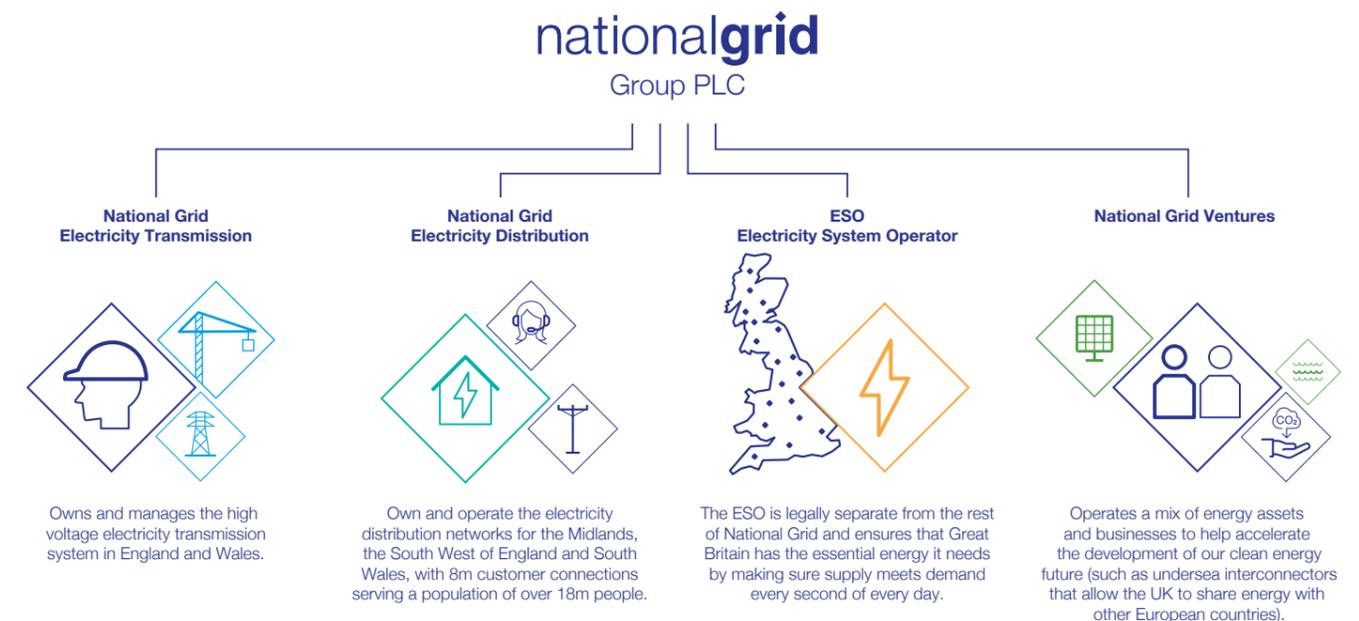
- 1.3.1. The proposed Project is an ‘EIA Development’. On 7 November 2022, National Grid submitted a Scoping Report to the SoS for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy¹, to inform the EIA for the proposed Project.
- 1.3.2. Within the Scoping Report, National Grid gave formal written notification under Regulation 8(1)(b) of the EIA Regulations that it considers the proposed Project will require (and that National Grid will in due course provide) an Environmental Statement in respect of the Project and it is considered to be an ‘EIA Development’.
- 1.3.3. A scoping opinion for the proposed Project was adopted by the Planning Inspectorate (on behalf of the SoS) on 14 December 2022.

¹ Predecessor to the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero, which was formed on 7 February 2023.

1.4. About National Grid Group PLC

- 1.4.1. National Grid sits at the heart of Great Britain’s energy system, connecting millions of people and businesses to the energy they use every day. We bring energy to life: in the heat, light, and power we bring to our customers’ homes and businesses; in the way that we support our communities and help them to grow; and in the way we show up in the world. It is our vision to be at the heart of a clean, fair, and affordable energy future.
- 1.4.2. Within the wider National Grid PLC group of companies there are four separate legal entities, each with their own roles and responsibilities. The structure of the National Grid PLC group of companies is available in Figure 1.1.

Figure 1.1: Structure of the wider National Grid PLC group of companies



- 1.4.3. National Grid Electricity Transmission (referred to here as National Grid), holds the transmission licence for England and Wales under the Electricity Act 1989. National Grid owns, builds, and maintains the high voltage electricity transmission system in England and Wales – the overhead lines, buried cables and substations that carry power around the country. It is National Grid that is developing the proposals for the Norwich to Tilbury Project.
- 1.4.4. National Grid Electricity Distribution owns and operates the distribution networks for the Midlands, the southwest of England and south Wales.
- 1.4.5. National Grid ESO is the Electricity System Operator (“ESO”) which operates the transmission network in Great Britain, including the networks in Scotland owned by Scottish Power Transmission and Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks. ESO manages the network, ensuring the right amount of energy is provided where it is needed. In April 2019, ESO became a legally separate business within the National Grid PLC group and is regulated independently by Ofgem.
- 1.4.6. The Energy Act 2023 legislated for the creation of a Future Systems Operator which will replace ESO in the future. In January 2024, ESO announced that the Future Systems Operator would be called the National Energy Systems Operator (“NESO”), which will be founded on the current activities of ESO and take a whole system approach to strengthen energy security, help deliver the Government’s Net Zero legislative agenda and ensure household bills are affordable in the long term.
- 1.4.7. National Grid Ventures is the unregulated commercial arm of the National Grid PLC group, investing in technologies and partnerships that help accelerate our move to a clean energy future. That includes interconnectors – connecting the UK with countries across the North Sea, allowing trade between energy markets and efficient use of renewable energy resources.
- 1.4.8. National Grid has a statutory duty to develop and maintain an efficient, coordinated, and economical system of electricity transmission under the Electricity Act 1989. This includes a statutory obligation to offer to connect any new generating stations or interconnectors applying to connect to the transmission system.
- 1.4.9. In developing proposals that affect the transmission system (including proposals to reinforce the network to accommodate new connections), National Grid is required to consider relevant National Policy Statements (NPSs). The NPSs relevant to the proposed Project are the Overarching National Policy Statement for Energy (EN-1) and the National Policy Statement for Electricity Networks Infrastructure (EN-5). The National Policy Statement for Renewable Energy (EN-3) also includes support for the onshore infrastructure required to deliver new offshore wind development. These NPSs came into force in January 2024.
- 1.4.10. National Grid is also required, under Section 38 of the Electricity Act 1989, to comply with the provisions of Schedule 9 of the Electricity Act 1989. Schedule 9 requires licence holders, in the formulation of proposals to transmit electricity, to preserve amenity, as outlined below:
- Schedule 9(1)(a) ‘...have regard to the desirability of preserving natural beauty, of conserving flora, fauna and geological or physiographical features of special interest and of protecting sites, buildings and objects of architectural, historic or archaeological interest;’ and*
- Schedule 9(1)(b) ‘...do what [it] reasonably can to mitigate any effect which the proposals would have on the natural beauty of the countryside or on any such flora, fauna, features, sites, buildings or objects.’*
- 1.4.11. How we set out to meet these environmental responsibilities and our commitments relating to engagement and consultation about proposals, is explained in our Stakeholder, Community and Amenity Policy².

² <https://www.nationalgrid.com/electricity-transmission/document/81026/download>

2. The Project

2.1. Project introduction

- 2.1.1. The Project is a proposal by National Grid to provide a new link on the transmission system by upgrading and reinforcing the electricity transmission system in East Anglia between Norwich and Tilbury.
- 2.1.2. The proposed Project would include the construction of a new 400 kV electricity transmission connection to reinforce the system to increase the capacity of the transmission network in this area. The current draft proposals for the Project that are being consulted on include approximately 159 km of new overhead lines and 25 km of underground cabling between the Norwich Main and Bramford substations in the northern part of the route, and from Bramford to Tilbury substations in the southern part of the route, as well as a new 400 kV substation.
- 2.1.3. An alternative design at the Waveney Valley is also being considered and is the subject of consultation and ongoing assessment, which would comprise approximately 2 km fewer overhead lines and an additional 2 km of underground cabling.
- 2.1.4. All of this work forms part of The Great Grid Upgrade – National Grid’s programme to deliver over five times the amount of electricity transmission infrastructure in the next seven years than has been built in the past 30 years.

2.2. Project background and need

- 2.2.1. The increase in renewable energy generation, in line with the UK Government’s Net Zero legislative agenda, is driving the need to expand the capacity of National Grid’s transmission system.
- 2.2.2. Great Britain already has 8.5 gigawatts (“GW”) of offshore wind energy in operation, and another 1.9 GW under construction. The Government’s Energy White Paper³ (December 2020) outlines a plan to increase energy from offshore wind to 40 GW by 2030 (this Government target was increased in April 2022 to 50 GW) and this Project would support in achieving this target.
- 2.2.3. New connections for new offshore wind and nuclear power generation projects and for interconnectors into East Anglia are expected to continue in addition to the current contracted position.
- 2.2.4. These new connections are being constructed or are expected to connect into substations at Necton, Norwich Main, Bramford, Friston and Sizewell. Additionally, connection agreements are in place with two offshore wind farm projects and one interconnector based on their connections into a new East Anglia Connection Node substation. National Grid has a duty to facilitate new connections and maintain a safe National Electricity Transmission System (“NETS”) and has considered the capability of the existing network to support such connections. This assessment considered various published Future Energy Scenarios (a range of scenarios which seek to address the uncertainty that exists over such an extended planning horizon) to consider network capability relative to the expected connection requirements.

³ www.gov.uk/government/publications/energy-white-paper-powering-our-net-zero-future/energy-white-paper-powering-our-net-zero-future-accessible-html-version

- 2.2.5. Much of East Anglia's 400 kV electricity transmission network was built in the 1960s. It was designed to supply regional demand, centred around Norwich and Ipswich. With the growth in new energy generation from offshore wind, nuclear power and interconnection with other countries, there will be more electricity connected in East Anglia than the network can currently accommodate.
- 2.2.6. As a result, and to meet its duties, National Grid needs to reinforce the electricity network to allow power to be imported to, and exported from, East Anglia and to provide additional capability to allow power flows into and out of the south east area to connect with areas of demand and interconnectors to Europe.
- 2.2.7. The proposed Project could also connect new offshore wind farms off the Essex coast to the electricity transmission network and a European interconnector. Two offshore wind farms, the North Falls Offshore Wind Farm and Five Estuaries Offshore Wind Farm, and the Tarchon Energy interconnector (from Germany) have been proposed. If consented, they are expected to be operational by the end of the decade.

3. Consultation and engagement to date

- 3.1.1. National Grid is committed to engaging and consulting with communities and stakeholders at an early stage of the proposed Project, giving people the opportunity to provide feedback and insight at a formative stage ahead of more detailed design work being carried out.
- 3.1.2. National Grid's approach to engagement in support of the proposed Project is to carry out both non-statutory and statutory consultation guided by the requirements of the Planning Act.
- 3.1.3. The first non-statutory consultation was held between 21 April 2022 and 16 June 2022. This was followed by a second non-statutory consultation held between 27 June 2023 and 21 August 2023. These are now being followed by statutory consultation as set out in **Section 5**.
- 3.1.4. At the first non-statutory consultation, National Grid presented a broad swathe within which new infrastructure (pylons and underground cables) could be located as well as a proposed new substation site on the Tendring Peninsula. Following the conclusion of this consultation, we analysed the feedback received and, along with further technical studies and design work, developed the project design ahead of the second non-statutory consultation.
- 3.1.5. At the second non-statutory consultation, National Grid presented a preferred draft indicative alignment showing potential pylon positions, underground cables, cable sealing end ("CSE") compounds and connection substations. The feedback received at this consultation was combined with our ongoing environmental assessments and technical studies to help identify the proposals presented at statutory consultation.

- 3.1.6. At both non-statutory consultations National Grid sought to identify and understand the views and opinions of all the stakeholders and communities who may potentially be affected by the proposed Project. National Grid consulted with stakeholders at an early stage to ensure technical advice and local knowledge was taken into account in the early development of the Project. These stakeholders included local councils, elected representatives, local residents, hard-to-reach groups, and local interest groups.
- 3.1.7. National Grid gave the stakeholders and local community digital and non-digital opportunities to engage with the proposals through a dedicated website, public events and webinar events as well as via email, phone and Freepost. At the launch of both non-statutory consultations, National Grid wrote to all homes within a 1 km Primary Consultation Zone ("PCZ") of the proposals – around 50,000 addresses – and placed adverts in local papers and on social media. The PCZ included people whose property postcodes lie within 1 km of the Project boundary presented at both consultations. This includes the graduated swathe presented at the 2022 non-statutory consultation and the preferred draft indicative alignment presented at the 2023 non-statutory consultation. Paper copies of the key consultation documents were also placed at information points in publicly accessible venues – libraries and, where possible, council offices – along the route. Alternative formats of the documents were available on request.
- 3.1.8. More information on both non-statutory consultations and how the feedback received at both non-statutory consultations helped influence and shape the proposals to date can be found in the 2022 Non-statutory Consultation Feedback Report and the 2023 Non-statutory Consultation Feedback Report. These are available on the Project's website⁴.
- 3.1.9. Methods used to raise further awareness of the proposed Project ahead of the statutory consultation period have included:
- issuing an interim newsletter to all addresses within the 2023 PCZ providing an update following the 2023 non-statutory consultation (issued in December 2023)
 - offering to brief and update elected representatives, local interest groups, local planning authority officers and hard-to-reach groups about the current status of the Project, plans for the forthcoming statutory consultation, and how people can get involved
 - engagement with the local media to raise awareness of the Project and each phase of consultation
 - providing updates to the Project website when new information is available.
- 3.1.10. More detail on the methods National Grid will use to publicise the statutory consultation is provided in **Section 5.5**.

⁴ www.nationalgrid.com/electricity-transmission/network-and-infrastructure/infrastructure-projects/norwich-to-tilbury

4. Project timeline

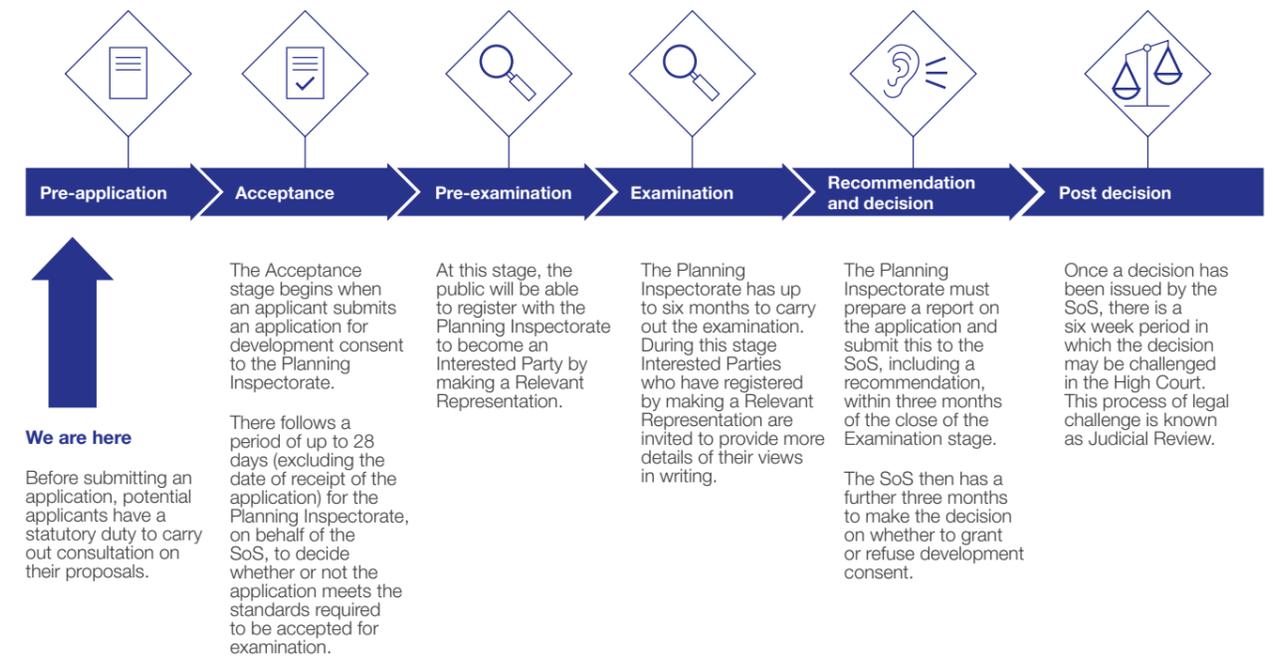
4.1.1. The proposed Project is currently in the pre-application stage of the national infrastructure planning process. Table 4.1 sets out the milestones for each stage of the proposed Project and indicative dates from pre-application consultation through to construction.

4.1.2. Figure 4.1 sets out the DCO consenting process.

Table 4.1: Project milestones

Stage
Non-statutory consultation – We held a period of non-statutory consultation between 21 April 2022 and 16 June 2022.
Consideration of 2022 non-statutory consultation feedback – We reviewed and had regard to feedback received during non-statutory consultation to inform the design of the proposed Project.
Non-statutory consultation – We held a second non-statutory consultation between 27 June 2023 and 21 August 2023.
Consideration of 2023 non-statutory consultation feedback – We reviewed and had regard to feedback received during non-statutory consultation to inform the design of the proposed Project.
Statutory consultation – We will consult the local community and statutory consultees (as outlined in Sections 42 and 47 of the Planning Act) on the draft proposals.
Consideration of 2024 statutory consultation feedback – We will review and have regard to the feedback received from the statutory consultation and finalise the proposed design. We will also continue engagement with stakeholders prior to submission of our DCO application.
Application submission – We plan to submit our DCO application to the Planning Inspectorate in 2025. The Planning Inspectorate, on behalf of the SoS, has up to 28 days to decide whether or not the application meets the standards required to be accepted for examination.
Examination – If the application is accepted, it will go through a six-month examination period. Prior to this period, stakeholders can register with the Planning Inspectorate to become an ‘Interested Party’ by making what is called a ‘Relevant Representation’. Interested Parties are invited to provide more details of their views in writing during this phase. Careful consideration is given by the Examining Authority, including to all relevant and written representations, and supporting evidence. The Examining Authority is the Inspector or the Panel of Inspectors appointed to conduct the Examination of the application for the DCO.
Recommendation and Decision – The Examining Authority must prepare a report on the application and submit this to the SoS, including a recommendation, within three months of the close of Examination. The SoS has a further three months to make a decision on whether to grant or refuse development consent.
Post-decision – Once a decision has been issued by the SoS, there is a six-week period in which the decision may be challenged in the High Court, known as Judicial Review. If granted development consent, construction could begin in 2026.

Figure 4.1: The DCO process



5. Consulting on the proposed application

5.1. How long will statutory consultation be?

- 5.1.1. The statutory consultation (under Sections 42 and 47 of the Planning Act) will run for ten weeks.

5.2. What proposals will be consulted on?

- 5.2.1. The proposed Project comprises a major reinforcement and upgrade of the Electricity Transmission System in East Anglia and is illustrated as a map of the Project area in **Figure 5.1**. This figure shows the geographical extent of the proposed Project boundary.
- 5.2.2. Overall location plans will be used to describe sections of the proposed Project and will be provided during the statutory consultation, consistent with how the Project has previously been presented.
- 5.2.3. National Grid will consult on all aspects of the proposed development for the Project, including:
- approximately 159 km of new 400 kV overhead line supported on approximately 510 steel lattice pylons (approximately 50 m in height) some of which are gantries (typically up to 15 m in height) within proposed CSEs compounds, or existing or proposed substations
 - approximately 25 km of 400 kV underground cabling some of which is located through the Dedham Vale National Landscape (formerly known as Dedham Vale AONB)

- six new CSE compounds, each with a permanent access, to connect the overhead lines to the underground cables
- a new 400 kV East Anglia Connection Node (“EACN”) substation, with a new permanent access, on the Tendring Peninsula. This is proposed to be an Air Insulated Switchgear (“AIS”) substation
- substation extension works at the existing Norwich Main, and Bramford substations and works within the existing Tilbury Substation to connect and support operation of the new transmission connection
- temporary works associated with construction of the Project.

- An alternative design at the Waveney Valley (referred to as the Waveney Valley Alternative) is also being considered and is the subject of consultation and ongoing assessment. This design alternative, if taken forward, would result in changes to those elements of the Project set out below. This would instead comprise:
 - installation of approximately 157 km of new 400 kV overhead line.
 - installation of approximately 27 km of 400 kV underground cabling (some of which is located through the Dedham Vale National Landscape.
 - eight new CSE compounds (each with a permanent access) to connect the overhead lines to the underground cables.
 - All other works not listed above would be consistent with either alternative.
 - In other words, the Waveney Valley Alternative, if taken forward and based on the 2024 preferred draft alignment would comprise approximately 2 km less new 400 kV overhead line and approximately an additional 2 km of 400 kV underground cabling and 2 additional new CSE compounds, each with a permanent access, to connect the overhead lines to the underground cables.
 - In addition, third party utilities diversions and / or modifications would also be required to facilitate the construction of the Project. There would also be land required for mitigation, compensation and enhancement of the environment including Biodiversity Net Gain (“BNG”).
 - As well as the permanent infrastructure, land would also be required temporarily for construction activities including for example working areas for construction equipment and machinery, site offices, welfare, storage and temporary construction access.
- 5.2.4. The Project as currently proposed is an EIA development and therefore we will also consult on preliminary environmental information as part of this statutory consultation in the form of a Preliminary Environmental Information Report (“PEIR”). We will make the PEIR available on the Project website during statutory consultation, as well as a non-technical summary of the PEIR. We will seek views on the information in those documents.
- The Project would be designed, constructed and operated in accordance with applicable health and safety legislation. The Project would also need to comply with design safety standards including the NETS Security and Quality of Supply Standard (“SQSS”), which sets out the criteria and methodology for planning and operating the NETS. This informs a suite of National Grid policies and processes, which contain details on design standards required to be met when designing, constructing and operating assets such as proposed for the Project.

Figure 5.1: Map of Project area



5.3. Who will be consulted?

- 5.3.1. The consultation will be open to anyone who is interested in the proposed Project, and National Grid will have regard to all consultation responses received by the relevant deadline.
- 5.3.2. Under Section 47 of the Planning Act, we have a duty to consult people living in the vicinity of the land, i.e., the local community. In consultation with the local authorities set out in **Section 1.1.3** we have developed a PCZ for the distribution of our Community Newsletter, as shown in Appendix A.
- 5.3.3. The PCZ includes people and businesses with property postcodes within 1 km of the proposed Project's red line boundary (representing the anticipated extent of land in which the proposed Project may take place). The zone has changed since the last round of consultation as a result of feedback and environmental studies as well as the inclusion of information such as construction access, compounds, laydown areas and the traffic routes we propose to use during construction. This latest zone amounts to approximately 77,000 addresses. Where appropriate, the PCZ has been extended to include whole streets and postcodes rather than the 1 km boundary dissecting hamlets or neighbourhoods.
- 5.3.4. An additional wider Secondary Consultation Zone ("SCZ") has been developed, comprising a 4 km buffer around the red line boundary, whereby wider publicity of the proposed Project will take place. The SCZ can be found in Appendix A.
- 5.3.5. Communities within the PCZ and SCZ will be notified about the consultation via methods outlined in **Section 5.5**.
- 5.3.6. As well as properties and businesses within the PCZ, we will also consult with various groups and individuals including parish councils representing parishes within the PCZ and relevant host and neighbouring local authorities defined under Section 43 of the Planning Act.
- 5.3.7. In addition to the local community, we will consult prescribed bodies and local authorities under Section 42(1)(a), (b) and Section 43 of the Planning Act. We will also consult persons who fall within Section 42(1)(d) and Section 44 of the Planning Act.

5.4. Consultation Materials

- 5.4.1. Table 5.1 sets out the consultation materials that will be developed to help people understand the proposals for the proposed Project and provide their feedback.

Table 5.1: Consultation materials

Document	Description	Target audience
Project Background Document	<p>This document will provide a summary of the proposed Project including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the background to the Project information about design changes as a result of the 2023 non-statutory consultation information about potential benefits and impacts of the proposed Project how we might propose to mitigate any significant effects signposts for readers to more detailed information reports and how to provide feedback on the Project. 	<p>All those interested in the consultation (see Section 5.3 for detail).</p> <p>This document will be published on the Project website, and available in paper copy on request and at inspection points listed in Table 5.2 and at public information events.</p> <p>National Grid will consider requests for copies of the document in alternative formats on a case-by-basis, taking into account individual circumstances.</p>
Community Newsletter 2024	<p>The newsletter will set out the proposed Project information, details about the consultation, an overview map of the proposed Project area and how to provide feedback, along with a list of engagement activities throughout the consultation period.</p>	<p>All residents and businesses with properties within the PCZ.</p> <p>The Community Newsletter will be posted to all properties within the PCZ. It will be published on the Project website, and available in paper copy on request and at inspection points listed in Table 5.2 and at public information events.</p> <p>National Grid will consider requests for copies of the document in alternative formats on a case-by-basis, taking into account individual circumstances.</p>

Document	Description	Target audience
Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR)	<p>The PEIR will contain a description of the proposed Project, and a preliminary assessment of the likely significant environmental effects of the proposed Project based on the initial information available at that time. It will also set out how we propose to reduce these effects and how we propose to maximise the benefits of the proposed Project.</p> <p>A non-technical summary (“NTS”) of the PEIR will also be made available.</p>	<p>All those interested in the consultation (see Section 5.3 for detail).</p> <p>The PEIR will be available on the Project website, and available to view in paper copy at public information events.</p> <p>The NTS will be available on the Project website, and available in paper copy on request (subject to availability), at inspection points listed in Table 5.2 and at public information events.</p> <p>Paper copies of the PEIR can be provided on request. This may be subject to a charge to cover printing and postage fees.</p>
2024 Design Development Report	<p>An in-depth technical document detailing the work we have undertaken to date, focusing on the work since the 2023 non-statutory consultation.</p>	<p>All those interested in the consultation (see Section 5.3 for detail).</p> <p>This document will be available on the Project website, and available to view in paper copy at public information events.</p> <p>Paper copies of the Design Development Report 2024 can be provided on request. This may be subject to a charge to cover printing and postage fees.</p>
2024 Strategic Options Backcheck and Review	<p>Providing an updated overview of the appraisal approach we have used to date to consider strategic options. These are reviewed and backchecked on as part of the ongoing strategic options assessment and decision-making process.</p>	<p>All those interested in the consultation (see Section 5.3 for detail).</p> <p>This document will be available on the Project website, and available to view in paper copy at public information events.</p> <p>Paper copies of the Strategic Options Backcheck and Review 2024 can be provided on request. This may be subject to a charge to cover printing and postage fees.</p>
2023 Non-Statutory Consultation Feedback Report	<p>Summarising the feedback we received during the 2023 non-statutory consultation and how it has been considered.</p>	<p>All those interested in the consultation (see Section 5.3 for detail).</p> <p>This document will be available on the Project website, and available to view in paper copy at public information events.</p> <p>Paper copies of the 2023 Non-Statutory Consultation Feedback Report can be provided on request. This may be subject to a charge to cover printing and postage fees.</p>

Document	Description	Target audience
Project maps / Project area maps	A series of maps and plans showing the extent of the proposed Project.	All those interested in the consultation (see Section 5.3 for detail). These will be available on the Project website and available to view in paper copy at public information events.
Consultation banners	A series of exhibition banners with information relating to the proposed Project that will be used at the public information events.	All those interested in the consultation (see Section 5.3 for detail). The consultation banners are primarily intended for use at the public information events and will also be made available on the Project website.
Interactive Project map	An interactive map of the proposed Project.	All those interested in the consultation (see Section 5.3 for detail). The interactive Project map will be made available on the Project website and on screen at the public information events, subject to technical constraints.
Consultation notices	We will publish notices with details of the consultation and provide to statutory consultees as required under Section 48 of the Planning Act.	All those interested in the consultation (see Section 5.3 for detail). These will be available on the Project website and available to view in paper copy on request.
Statement of Community Consultation (SoCC)	The SoCC sets out how National Grid intends to consult statutory consultees, stakeholders, affected residents, businesses and local communities ahead of its application for development consent for the Project.	All those interested in the consultation (see Section 5.3 for detail). The SoCC will be published on the Project website and available in paper copy on request and at inspection points listed in Table 5.2 and at public information events. As required under Section 47 of the Planning Act, notice of the SoCC will also be published in local newspapers.
Feedback questionnaire	An online and paper feedback questionnaire to gather responses to the statutory consultation.	All those interested in the consultation (see Section 5.3 for detail). The feedback questionnaire will be available on the Project website, and available in paper copy on request and at inspection points listed in Table 5.2 and at public information events. Paper copies can be returned free of charge using a Freepost address: FREEPOST N TO T).
Guide to Interacting with our Consultation Plans	A guide outlining the consultation maps and plans, and how to use them.	All those interested in the consultation (see Section 5.3 for detail). This document will be available on the Project website and available in paper copy on request and at public information events.

- 5.4.2. National Grid will consider requests for copies of select consultation materials identified in Table 5.1 in alternative formats on a case-by-basis, taking into account individual circumstances.
- 5.4.3. All consultation materials will also be available on the Project's website. Information will be easy to access and will be presented in a variety of ways to suit user requirements.

- 5.4.4. Table 5.2 sets out how we will make the consultation documents available.

Table 5.2: Methods to make consultation documents available.

Activity	Detail		
Project website	<p>All consultation documents will be hosted on the Project website throughout the consultation period. We will provide the following local authorities with a link to all the consultation documents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Norfolk County Council • Suffolk County Council • Essex County Council • Thurrock Council • South Norfolk District Council • Mid Suffolk District Council • Babergh District Council • Tendring District Council • Colchester City Council • Braintree District Council • Chelmsford City Council • Brentwood Borough Council • Basildon Borough Council. <p>Paper copies of selected consultation documents will also be available by request, free of charge. Paper copies of the PEIR can be provided on request. This may be subject to a charge to cover printing and postage fees.</p>		
Inspection points	<p>While no longer a statutory requirement, in addition to being available online, we will seek to ensure the Community Newsletter, Project Background Document, NTS of the PEIR, SoCC and feedback questionnaire are available to view at the following locations throughout the consultation period.</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td style="vertical-align: top;"> <p>Long Stratton Library The Street, Long Stratton, NR15 2XJ</p> <p>Norwich Library Unit 3, The Forum Millenium Plain, Norwich, NR2 1AW</p> <p>Tuckswold Library Robin Hood Road, Eaton, NR4 6BX</p> <p>Diss Library Church Street, Diss, IP22 4DD</p> <p>Stowmarket Library Milton Road, Stowmarket, IP14 1EX</p> <p>Capel St Mary Library Village Hall, The Street, Capel St. Mary IP9 2EF</p> <p>Coggeshall Library The Friends Meeting House, Stoneham Street, Coggeshall CO6 1UH</p> </td> <td style="vertical-align: top;"> <p>Chelmsford Library Market Road, Chelmsford CM1 1QH</p> <p>Colchester Library Trinity Square, Colchester CO1 1JB</p> <p>Tilbury Library Civic Square, Tilbury RM18 8AD</p> <p>Greenstead Library Hawthorn Avenue, Colchester CO4 3QE</p> <p>Stanway Library 10, Villa Road, Stanway CO3 0RH</p> <p>Prettygate Library Prettygate Road, Colchester CO3 4EQ</p> <p>Wivenhoe Library 104/6 High Street, Wivenhoe CO7 9AB</p> </td> </tr> </table> <p>Prior to attending these locations, it is advised that opening hours are checked. We will check that consultation documentation remains at the inspection points throughout the consultation period. We will also try to use local websites to act as public inspection points, by requesting they host a link to the Project website. These may include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • local authority websites • parish websites • local library websites • MP websites 	<p>Long Stratton Library The Street, Long Stratton, NR15 2XJ</p> <p>Norwich Library Unit 3, The Forum Millenium Plain, Norwich, NR2 1AW</p> <p>Tuckswold Library Robin Hood Road, Eaton, NR4 6BX</p> <p>Diss Library Church Street, Diss, IP22 4DD</p> <p>Stowmarket Library Milton Road, Stowmarket, IP14 1EX</p> <p>Capel St Mary Library Village Hall, The Street, Capel St. Mary IP9 2EF</p> <p>Coggeshall Library The Friends Meeting House, Stoneham Street, Coggeshall CO6 1UH</p>	<p>Chelmsford Library Market Road, Chelmsford CM1 1QH</p> <p>Colchester Library Trinity Square, Colchester CO1 1JB</p> <p>Tilbury Library Civic Square, Tilbury RM18 8AD</p> <p>Greenstead Library Hawthorn Avenue, Colchester CO4 3QE</p> <p>Stanway Library 10, Villa Road, Stanway CO3 0RH</p> <p>Prettygate Library Prettygate Road, Colchester CO3 4EQ</p> <p>Wivenhoe Library 104/6 High Street, Wivenhoe CO7 9AB</p>
<p>Long Stratton Library The Street, Long Stratton, NR15 2XJ</p> <p>Norwich Library Unit 3, The Forum Millenium Plain, Norwich, NR2 1AW</p> <p>Tuckswold Library Robin Hood Road, Eaton, NR4 6BX</p> <p>Diss Library Church Street, Diss, IP22 4DD</p> <p>Stowmarket Library Milton Road, Stowmarket, IP14 1EX</p> <p>Capel St Mary Library Village Hall, The Street, Capel St. Mary IP9 2EF</p> <p>Coggeshall Library The Friends Meeting House, Stoneham Street, Coggeshall CO6 1UH</p>	<p>Chelmsford Library Market Road, Chelmsford CM1 1QH</p> <p>Colchester Library Trinity Square, Colchester CO1 1JB</p> <p>Tilbury Library Civic Square, Tilbury RM18 8AD</p> <p>Greenstead Library Hawthorn Avenue, Colchester CO4 3QE</p> <p>Stanway Library 10, Villa Road, Stanway CO3 0RH</p> <p>Prettygate Library Prettygate Road, Colchester CO3 4EQ</p> <p>Wivenhoe Library 104/6 High Street, Wivenhoe CO7 9AB</p>		

Activity	Detail
Document requests	<p>Following the launch of the statutory consultation, consultees will be able to request paper copies of consultation documents. The documents that will be made available, on request, free of charge will be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Newsletter • Project Background Document • Feedback questionnaire • NTS of the PEIR. Requests for paper copies of the technical documents forming the PEIR will be reviewed on a case by-case basis • SoCC. <p>Paper copies of other consultation documents will also be available on request. To cover printing costs a reasonable charge may apply, to be paid for by the recipient and up to a maximum value of £500 for the whole suite of consultation documents. Requests can be made by contacting us using the details provided in Section 6.1. We will also consider requests for alternative formats of documents on a case by case basis.</p>
Public information events	<p>Paper copies of the consultation documents will be available for review at the public information events.</p> <p>More detail on the public events is available in Section 5.6.</p>

5.5. Promoting the consultation

- 5.5.1. Residents, local businesses and community organisations within the PCZ will be notified of the start of the consultation in a variety of ways, including through a Community Newsletter, as outlined in Table 5.1 above. A map showing the PCZ (approximately 77,000 addresses) can be found in Appendix A.
- 5.5.2. A range of other methods will be used to promote the consultation to local communities, as set out in Table 5.3.

Table 5.3: Promotion methods

Method	Detail
Press release	<p>A press release publicising the upcoming consultation and how the community can get involved will be issued ahead of the consultation. The distribution list is likely to include the following media:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basildon Standard • BBC Look East • BBC Radio Essex • BBC Radio Norfolk • BBC Radio Suffolk • Basildon Standard • Basildon, Canvey, Southend Echo • Braintree and Witham Times • Brentwood Gazette • Brentwood Live • Brentwood Weekly News • Bury Free Press • Bury Mercury • Chelmsford Weekly News • Dereham Times • Diss Express • Diss Mercury • Dunmow Broadcast • East Anglian Daily Times • Eastern Daily Press • Essex Chronicle • Essex Focus • Essex Live • Thurrock Advertiser. <p>The circulation areas of these newspapers extend across both the PCZ and the SCZ, as well as further afield.</p>
Newspaper advertisements	<p>Two rounds of newspaper advertisements will be undertaken during the consultation. Advertisements will provide details of the consultation, where more information can be found, how to respond, and the dates of the engagement activities.</p> <p>Advertisements will be placed in both print and digital publications to ensure wider coverage within and beyond the PCZ and SCZ. We will place adverts in the following titles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • East Anglian Daily Times • Eastern Daily Press • Essex Chronicle.

Method	Detail
Emails and letters	<p>We will send, via email, letters about the consultation and how to get involved to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MPs, where all or part of their constituencies lie within either consultation zone. • Elected representatives within the PCZ at: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Norfolk County Council • Suffolk County Council • Essex County Council • Thurrock Council • South Norfolk District Council • Mid Suffolk District Council • Babergh District Council • Tendring District Council • Colchester City Council • Braintree District Council • Chelmsford City Council • Brentwood Borough Council • Basildon Borough Council • Parish Councils within the PCZ
Statutory notices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will publish statutory notices in locally circulating newspapers • We will publicise the consultation – once in a national newspaper and the London Gazette and twice in local circulating newspapers.
Information posters	<p>Posters including details of the consultation, how to access Project information, and how to get involved, will be sent to each parish council within the PCZ.</p>
Social media	<p>We will promote the consultation on National Grid UK's X (formerly Twitter) and Facebook account, @NationalGridUK.</p> <p>We will also develop a social media guide for local authorities to use on their social media channels. This guide will include links for the Project website.</p> <p>We are unable to accept feedback through social media channels, however, we will monitor comments or questions we receive through our owned channels and respond where practicable. We will aim to point people towards sources of information, including the Project website, the interactive Project map and to formal feedback channels.</p>

- 5.5.3. Any activity(ies) that cannot be undertaken due to circumstances beyond our control, where possible, will be substituted with similar activity(ies) and advertised in local newspapers (via press release) circulating in the vicinity of the proposed Project.
- Any activity changes will also be published on the Project website and on National Grid UK's X (formerly Twitter) and Facebook accounts @NationalGridUK.

5.6. Public information events

- 5.6.1. Public information events will be held for communities to find out information about the proposed Project and the consultation and talk to representatives from the Project team. The events will be held at suitable, publicly accessible venues that are within or near to the PCZ.
- 5.6.2. Details of where and when the public information events will be held will be published on the Project website and in the Community Newsletter sent to all properties within the PCZ and available at inspection points.
- 5.6.3. The events will be held during afternoons and early evenings in the week and at least one will be held on a weekend, where feasible.
- 5.6.4. Copies of all relevant consultation materials will be made available in print format at each event. There will also be a series of banners to present the proposals for the proposed Project, including maps.
- 5.6.5. Those attending the public information events will be encouraged to provide their feedback via the online or paper feedback questionnaire on the proposals.
- 5.6.6. Should any events (in person or webinars) need to be altered or cancelled for any reason, the most appropriate mitigation would be identified on a case-by-case basis in consultation with the relevant Local Planning Authority(ies).

5.7. Webinars

- 5.7.1. We will try to hold six webinars during the consultation period. We will run two general overview webinars and four that are section specific. People will be able to sign up to the webinars via the Project website, or by contacting National Grid by using the contact details set out in **Section 6.1**.
- 5.7.2. The sessions will cover the proposals in detail and provide an opportunity for attendees to ask questions of the Project team.
- 5.7.3. National Grid will endeavor to make British Sign Language interpretation available for one of the general overview webinars which will be recorded and published on the Project website.

5.8. Stakeholder briefings and meetings

- 5.8.1. National Grid will offer briefings and / or meetings with the following stakeholders in the run-up to, or during the consultation:
- MPs, where all or part of their constituencies lie within either consultation zone.
 - Elected representatives of district and county councils within the PCZ.
 - Parish councils, where all or part of the parish falls within the PCZ.
 - Local authorities, including neighbouring authorities.
 - Key prescribed consultees, such as National Landscapes (formerly known as AONB) conservation boards.
 - Persons with an Interest in Land (PILs) under Sections 42(1)(d) of the Planning Act.
- 5.8.2. National Grid will consider meetings with other organisations and individuals upon request.

5.9. Hard-to-reach / seldom heard groups

- 5.9.1. National Grid wants to ensure that all our engagement and consultation is inclusive, and we want to reach those who otherwise may not engage with us. Hard-to-reach and seldom heard groups are defined as being inaccessible to most traditional and conventional methods of consultation for any reason.
- 5.9.2. To allow people to engage with the proposed Project and the consultation at their own convenience, we have taken a 'digital first' approach to consultation. This allows individuals and groups to take part even if they cannot make an event. The online webinar and Project website is open and accessible to anyone to attend and ask questions of the Project team. Information will be available on the website and people are encouraged to submit feedback using the online feedback questionnaire. Those engaging with the Project can also ask questions and find out more by contacting National Grid by using the contact details set out in **Section 6.1**.
- 5.9.3. For those less able or less comfortable engaging digitally, we have developed consultation 'in person' aspects to be as accessible as possible, with the focus on ensuring events are accessible and held over several days in different locations to encourage attendance. We will also seek to ensure there is adequate parking and venues are accessible via public transport.
- 5.9.4. Inspection points have also been identified based on their accessibility and availability for people wanting to access Project information.
- 5.9.5. We also recognise that some individuals or groups may have difficulty taking part in the consultation process for a range of reasons. We have identified several organisations representing hard to reach or seldom heard groups. These organisations will be written to, via email, at the start of consultation. Requests for specific additional consultation activities will be planned and agreed with the requesting organisation so that our activities best meet the needs of those it represents.
- 5.9.6. On request, we will also consider providing materials in alternative formats. We will endeavor to provide British Sign Language signing at one of our webinars.
- 5.9.7. Table 5.4 sets out how the proposed Project will seek to engage hard to reach/seldom heard groups during the consultation.

Table 5.4: Hard to reach and seldom heard group engagement tools

Group category	Methods to be used
Older people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Directly mailing the Community Newsletter to all properties within the PCZ and providing details of how to access digital and paper copies of other documents and provide feedback by post if needed. • Options to submit feedback through conventional communications channels including by post and telephone if deemed necessary. • Face-to-face events at a variety of locations and times across the route. • Webinar events for people unable to attend in-person events. • Consideration of alternative formats on a case-by-case basis. • Engaging with community groups serving the demographic. • Providing paper copies of materials at inspection point locations along with contact details for the Project Team, who will be able to provide further assistance and send selected consultation documents to those who are unable to access the material online.
People with visual impairments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On request, audio guide of consultation banners. • Consideration of alternative formats on a case-by-case basis. • Options to enlarge text on the Project's website.
People with limited mobility / disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Options to submit feedback through conventional communications channels including by post and telephone if deemed necessary. • Directly mailing the Community Newsletter to all properties within the PCZ and providing details of how to access digital and paper copies of other documents and provide feedback by post if needed. • Online engagement opportunities through the consultation website and webinars to negate the need for travel. • Consideration of alternative formats on a case-by-case basis. • Face-to-face public information events at a variety of locations and times with disabled access, across the route of the proposed Project. • Virtual webinar sessions for those with further questions, featuring a booking system which will take into consideration individual needs. • Endeavouring to provide a British Sign Language interpreter at one of our webinars.
Youth groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online engagement and provision of the Project website. • Social media and newspaper advertising across the PCZ, SCZ and further afield. Face-to-face public information events at a variety of locations and times across the route of the proposed Project. • Contacting local centres of education to offer engagement opportunities. • Provision of a youth webinar forum during consultation.

Group category	Methods to be used
Carers and families with young children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Directly mailing the Community Newsletter to all properties within the PCZ and providing details of how to access digital and paper copies of other documents and provide feedback by post if needed. • Options to engage through conventional and digital channels, to provide flexibility. • Face-to-face public information events and webinar sessions at a variety of locations and times across the route of the proposed Project. • Online engagement opportunities through the consultation website and webinars to negate the need for travel. • Social media and newspaper advertising across the PCZ, SCZ and further afield.
Economically inactive individuals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online engagement • Social media and newspaper advertising across the PCZ, SCZ and further afield. • Options to engage through conventional and digital channels, to provide flexibility.
Geographically isolated individuals or communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Directly mailing the Community Newsletter to all properties within the PCZ and providing details of how to access digital and paper copies of other documents and provide feedback by post if needed. • Face-to-face public information events and webinar sessions at a variety of locations and times across the route of the proposed Project. • Online engagement opportunities through the consultation website and webinars to negate the need for travel. • Social media and newspaper advertising across the PCZ, SCZ and further afield.
Locally under-represented minority ethnic groups (such as black, Asian and minority ethnicity)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emailing community groups representing under-represented minority ethnic groups to offer engagement opportunities.
English as a Second Language (ESL)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Endeavouring to provide consultation materials in alternative languages upon reasonable request.
Travellers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contacting community groups representing travellers to offer engagement opportunities. • Social media and newspaper advertising across the PCZ, SCZ and further afield.
Digitally isolated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reaching out to community groups representing digitally isolated groups to offer engagement opportunities. • Directly mailing the Community Newsletter to all properties within the PCZ and providing details of how to access digital and paper copies of other documents and provide feedback by post if needed. • Advertisement of the consultation in traditional media such as local newspapers circulating in the PCZ, SCZ and further afield. • Providing paper copies of materials at inspection point locations along with contact details for the Project Team, who will be able to provide further assistance and send selected consultation documents to those who are unable to access the material online.

6. Responding to the consultation

6.1. Methods of responding

- 6.1.1. People will be able to submit their feedback in the following ways:
- Completing the feedback questionnaire online via the Project website: nationalgrid.com/norwich-to-tilbury
 - Providing feedback by email (contact@n-t.nationalgrid.com) or in writing (FREEPOST N TO T).
 - Completing a paper feedback questionnaire, which can be provided on request, at one of the designated inspection points, or completed in person at the face-to-face events. The questionnaire can be returned free-of-charge using the Freepost address: FREEPOST N TO T (please write this in capitals, you do not need a stamp).
- 6.1.2. Consultation responses received via any other method than those listed above, such as through social media, may not be formally recorded as part of the consultation.
- 6.1.3. Responses given orally, such as via telephone or in a meeting, may be considered in exceptional circumstances on a case-by-case basis where someone may not otherwise be able to respond to the consultation.
- 6.1.4. All responses must be received by 11:59pm on the final day of consultation.
- 6.1.5. All feedback will be handled in accordance with all applicable laws concerning the protection of personal data, including the UK General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).
- 6.1.6. More information on how National Grid will use the information collected about respondents will be made available in the consultation feedback form and on the Project's website during the consultation period.

6.2. Presenting the results

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| <p>6.2.1. Following the close of the consultation all feedback will be collated, reviewed and analysed to understand key themes and concerns. Our proposals will be reviewed and, where appropriate, refined in light of feedback.</p> <p>6.2.2. The proposed DCO application will be finalised, taking into consideration the feedback received from the consultation in accordance with Section 49 of the Planning Act.</p> <p>6.2.3. A Consultation Report will be produced as part of the application for a DCO, as required by Section 37(3)(c) of the Planning Act. The report will include a summary of the consultation process undertaken in accordance with this SoCC and will set out how the feedback from the consultation has shaped and influenced the proposals as submitted within the application for a DCO.</p> | <p>6.2.4. Responses to the consultation and extracts of responses may be published as part of the report. Any responses that are published will have all personal details redacted.</p> <p>6.2.5. Upon receipt of an application for a DCO, the Planning Inspectorate will decide whether the application meets the required standards to proceed to examination and will determine whether the statutory consultation process has been adequate. As part of this process, local authorities will be invited to provide an adequacy of the consultation response to the Planning Inspectorate.</p> <p>6.2.6. The Consultation Report will be available online, alongside other application documents, once an application for a DCO has been accepted. Paper copies will be available from the Project Team on request and may be subject to a charge to cover printing and postage fees.</p> |
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6.3. Further consultation

- 6.3.1. If, following the statutory consultation, National Grid considers it is necessary to undertake further statutory consultation, this would be undertaken, so far as relevant, practicable and proportionate, in accordance with the principles and methods set out in this SoCC or any update to it.

6.4. Other developers' consultations

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| <p>6.4.1. The Project team is aware that National Grid and other organisations are developing energy and network proposals in the area, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Grid's Bramford to Twinstead Reinforcements • National Grid Ventures' LionLink (formerly known as EuroLink) and Nautilus interconnectors • National Grid's Sea Link proposal • National Grid's Grain to Tilbury proposal • National Grid's Eastern Links 3 and 4 proposals • National Grid's North Humber to High Marnham and Grimsby to Walpole proposals • North Falls offshore wind farm • Five Estuaries offshore wind farm • Tarchon Interconnector. | <p>6.4.2. National Grid will work to understand other local projects to ensure that the scope and context of this proposed Project is clear in relation to the other consultations. This could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • having headline information about the other consultations at our events • seeking to avoid holding events or running advertisements and press releases on the same dates and times as other consultations, where appropriate • ensuring that any responses submitted to our statutory consultation that are intended for another consultation are passed on to the relevant community relations or consultation team. However, should people have specific questions about other projects, they should engage directly with relevant project team(s) to ask questions and/or provide feedback. |
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Appendix



Appendix A – Primary and Secondary Consultation Zones

Notes

Blank area for notes.

Notes

Notes



Contact us

If you would like to contact the Community Relations team, please get in touch via:

0800 915 2497
FREEPOST N TO T
contact@n-t.nationalgrid.com
nationalgrid.com/norwich-to-tilbury

