

The Great Grid Upgrade

Cross Border Connection

Stage 1 Consultation Strategy

October 2025

nationalgrid

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Introduction

This document outlines how National Grid Electricity Transmission (National Grid) intends to carry out a pre-application Stage 1 consultation in autumn 2025 on our proposals for the section of Cross Border Connection in England. This will provide an opportunity for communities and stakeholders to find out more about our early proposals and share feedback.

Cross Border Connection is a joint project between National Grid and SP Energy Networks. National Grid is developing the section of the project located in England which extends from the England-Scotland border to the Carlisle area. SP Energy Networks is developing the section of the project located in Scotland, which extends from the proposed Gala North Substation to the Scotland-England border. For clarity and convenience, our consultation materials will signpost people to SP Energy Networks' project website and contact details, where appropriate.

This Stage 1 consultation is for National Grid's proposals for the section of Cross Border Connection in England.

Cross Border Connection is in an early stage of its development and feedback from this Stage 1 consultation will help us develop our proposals.

The emerging preferred corridors for the English section of Cross Border Connection are located within the Cumberland Council local authority boundary. Neighbouring local authorities – including Westmorland and Furness Council and Scottish Borders Council – would not currently host infrastructure but would be located within the Primary Consultation Zone (PCZ) and/or Secondary Consultation Zone (SCZ), which are explained in more detail on pages 9-10.

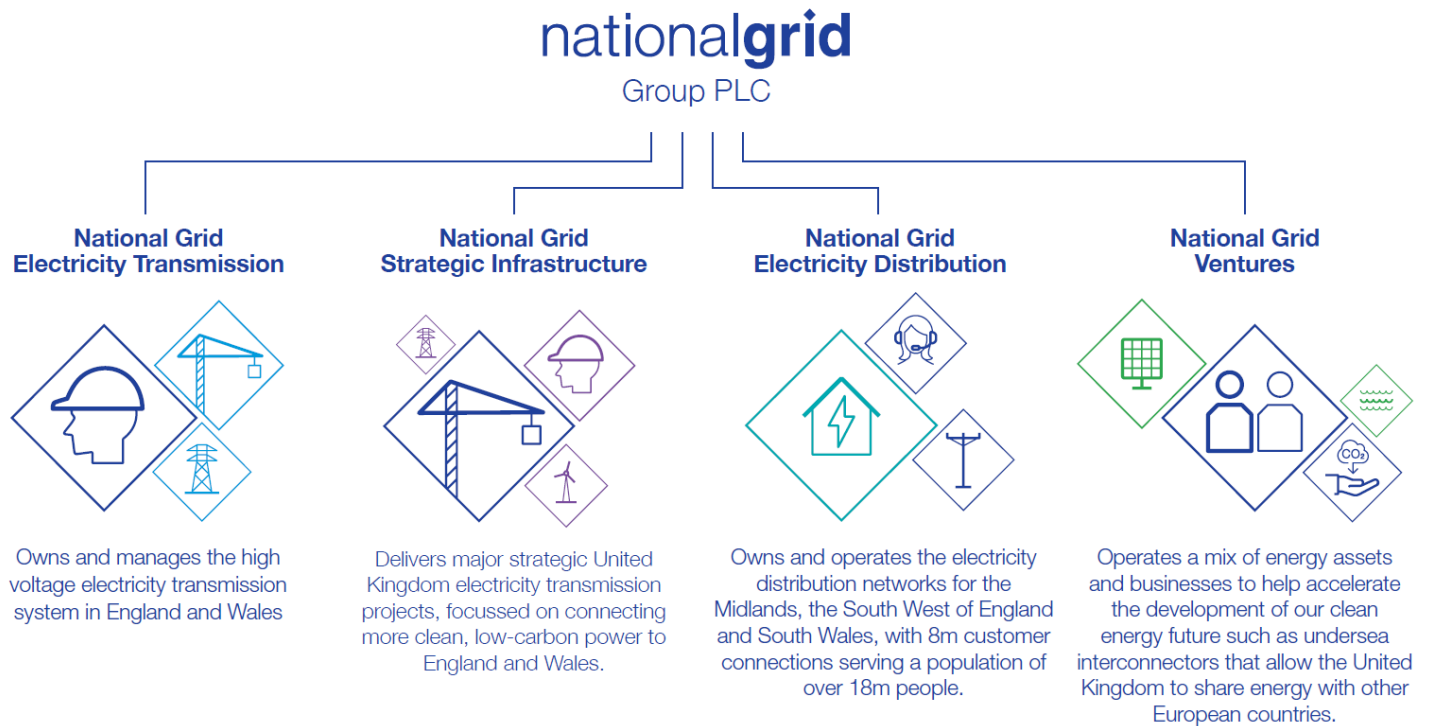
A Statement of Community Consultation (SoCC) will be prepared ahead of our Stage 2 consultation, which will take place at a later date. The content of the SoCC will build on this consultation approach. It will be discussed with representatives of the relevant local planning authorities and finalised ahead of the formal stage of consultation on the SoCC as per section 47 of the Planning Act 2008.

Emerging preferred corridor

This is the area within which the proposed infrastructure may be located.

National Grid Electricity Transmission – what we do in the UK

National Grid delivers electricity safely, reliably, and efficiently to the customers we serve – all while working towards building a cleaner, fairer energy system for the future.



National Grid Electricity Transmission sits at the heart of Britain's energy system, connecting millions of people and businesses to the energy they use every day. Every time a phone is plugged in, or a switch is turned on, we've played a part, connecting you to the electricity you need. It is Strategic Infrastructure, which is part of National Grid Electricity Transmission that is developing the proposals for Cross Border Connection.

National Grid Ventures sits outside the above businesses, 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.

National Grid Electricity Distribution is the local distribution network operator for the Midlands, South West of England and South Wales.

The way electricity is generated is changing, with more renewable energy being generated in Britain. Demand is also set to significantly increase as the way we power our homes, businesses, industry and transport changes. Meeting government targets will be a major step towards decarbonising our economy and providing homes and businesses with clean, secure, and more affordable energy.

The Clean Power 2030 Action Plan, published in December 2024, sets out the Government's ambition to see 43-50 gigawatts (GW) of offshore wind, 27-29 GW of onshore wind, and 45-47 GW of solar power connected by 2030, significantly reducing our dependency as a country on fossil-fuels.

To deliver more home-grown clean power to where it is needed and increase our energy security, we must also upgrade the transmission system – 'the grid'. At National Grid Electricity Transmission, we are working to make this future possible.

When developing transmission network proposals, we must, under the Electricity Act 1989, do that in an efficient, coordinated and economical way, and have regard to the desirability of preserving amenity. Options to deliver additional network capability and the options we take forward are evaluated against these statutory duties. We must balance the need to develop the network in a way that is efficient, coordinated and economical, and reduces effects on people and places.

National Grid only develops new infrastructure where the existing transmission system cannot be further upgraded, system changes cannot be satisfied by other means or where customer connections are required.

We have explained how we set out to meet these responsibilities and our commitments relating to engagement and consultation about our proposals in our Stakeholder, Community and Amenity Policy¹.

¹ nationalgrid.com/document/81026/download

About the project

Cross Border Connection is one of a number of network reinforcements across the country that are needed to increase the capability of the network to meet our future energy needs.

Introducing the English section of Cross Border Connection

Cross Border Connection is a joint project between National Grid and SP Energy Networks. National Grid is developing the section of the project located in England which extends from the Carlisle area to the England-Scotland border.

SP Energy Networks is responsible for the section of Cross Border Connection in Scotland. SP Energy Networks has identified a proposed route for the Scottish section of the project up to the Scotland-England border, which was subject to public consultation in autumn 2024 and in spring 2025.

They will submit their own separate consenting application for the Scottish section of Cross Border Connection via the Energy Consents Unit to Scottish Ministers.

As part of this consultation, National Grid is not consulting on Cross Border Connection infrastructure in Scotland.

Cross Border Connection in England

Cross Border Connection would form part of a major programme of reinforcement of the electricity transmission system to accommodate substantial and increasing power flows between Scotland and England.

Cross Border Connection would upgrade the electricity transmission network by providing:

- a new 400 kilovolt (400 kV) substation in the Carlisle area ('new Carlisle substation')
- a new 400 kV overhead line between the new Carlisle substation and the England-Scotland border
- a connection from the new Carlisle substation to the existing network.

We are currently considering two options for the location of the new Carlisle substation. More information on these can be found on page 16 of the Stage 1 Consultation Document, available on our project website: **nationalgrid.com/cbc**

The new substation would also accommodate potential future projects identified by NESO as part of the broader upgrade to the North of England's transmission infrastructure.

Cross Border Connection is in an early stage of development; with the approximate locations of proposed infrastructure (expressed in the terms of emerging preferred corridors, siting zones/siting areas and graduated swathe) being shared for feedback.

Further development and refinement of the proposals will require technical assessments, stakeholder engagement and community consultation. Accessing detailed local knowledge will be key to the development and refinement of the project in England.

Purpose of the Stage 1 consultation

We want to introduce our proposals to communities and ensure that all stakeholders have the opportunity to provide feedback on our proposals.

We will present our emerging preferred corridors for the proposed new 400 kilovolt (400 kV) electricity connection to show our early thinking about the area, including where we may route the new overhead line, and the siting zones/siting areas for the proposed new Carlisle substation.

The aim of this Stage 1 consultation is to:

- introduce and provide an overview of the section of Cross Border Connection in England to communities and stakeholders
- explain the different aspects of Cross Border Connection in England – a new overhead line and substation location
- explain the need for Cross Border Connection
- explain why we need to develop our proposals and the work undertaken to date, including options that have been considered
- explain how the decision was made on the emerging preferred corridors and siting zones being proposed, including optionality
- ensure communities and stakeholders have the opportunity to engage with our consultation and encourage feedback on our proposals
- outline our next steps, specifically how we intend to further develop our proposals and how feedback received would be taken into account.

Consultation period

This Stage 1 consultation will launch in October 2025 and run for a period of eight-weeks.

Consultation area

We have developed a Primary Consultation Zone (PCZ) and Secondary Consultation Zone (SCZ) to inform our engagement activities.

Option B's emerging preferred corridor is identical to Option A's emerging preferred corridor apart from the section that extends further south. Therefore, the consultation zones are drawn from Option B's emerging preferred corridor as it is the maximum geographical extent of the English section of Cross Border Connection and covers both options. See page 22 for a map of the consultation zones.

The Primary Consultation Zone (PCZ) will include the areas within the emerging preferred corridors and within 1 km from the edges of the emerging preferred corridors. All relevant stakeholders within this area will be consulted including contacting each residential and business address directly.

We will mail a newsletter to all properties within the PCZ with a postcode. Where appropriate, we will also mail a newsletter to properties with postcodes closely neighbouring the PCZ boundary. Reasonable best efforts will be made to ensure that all properties sent the newsletter receive it.

The newsletter will be tailored to present information on our proposals and will include:

- an introduction to Cross Border Connection in England and an explanation of what we are consulting on
- details of the project website, public information events, webinars and local information points
- how to provide feedback on our proposals
- information on further project materials and how to access paper copies
- maps showing both the overhead line emerging preferred corridors and substation siting zones for both options
- contact details to find out more information
- project timeline.

The Secondary Consultation Zone (SCZ) will extend for 5 km from the edges of the emerging preferred corridors.

The SCZ will include residents and stakeholders who are further from the English section of Cross Border Connection but may have concerns, such as construction traffic and long-distance views.

We will seek to raise awareness of our proposals and public consultation with residents and stakeholders within the SCZ through the broad dissemination of information. Those within the PCZ will also be targeted with this information. This will include:

- placing advertisements in print and digital local publications publicising the consultation
- local media engagement, including sharing a press release
- providing consultation materials at local information points for public viewing
- placing advertisements on social media to target different demographics and to include those who might not otherwise engage with the consultation
- publishing details of consultation events on the project website
- providing contact details for queries and how to request paper copies of consultation materials on the project website
- sending letters to stakeholders within the SCZ, such as representative bodies, elected members and parliamentarians sharing information on our proposals, how to get involved in the consultation and a digital poster to disseminate via their channels.

It is worth noting that our Stage 1 consultation is open to anyone with an interest in our proposals for the English section of Cross Border Connection.

Consultation materials

In addition to this Stage 1 Consultation Strategy, the following materials will be published as part of the consultation:

Material type	Description
Stage 1 Consultation Community Newsletter	Directly mailed document summarising details of our proposals and our public consultation.
Stage 1 Consultation Document	Non-technical document summarising details of our proposals, detailing our proposals and how we are consulting.
Stage 1 Consultation Feedback Form	To gather comments and feedback on our proposals. Available on the website, and in paper form at public information events, local information points or by request.
Consultation banners	For display at public information events, providing an overview of key aspects of the scheme.
Project website	Webpage hosting all project information, including downloadable versions of all consultation documents, FAQs, and the online Feedback Form: nationalgrid.com/cbc .
Interactive map	An online map showing general locations of proposed infrastructure.
Strategic Options Report (SOR)	A technical document that shows the need case for Cross Border Connection and what strategic options we considered to address it.
Corridor Preliminary Routeing and Siting Study (CPRSS)	A technical document that outlines how we have carried out detailed environmental surveys and technical assessments to identify areas that may be more or less sensitive to the introduction of new infrastructure.
Maps of our proposals	Maps showing the location of the emerging preferred corridors, siting zones/siting areas and the graduated swathe.

Paper copies of our key non-technical documents (Stage 1 Consultation Document, Consultation Community Newsletter and Feedback Form) will be posted free of charge upon request.

Stakeholder briefings and meetings

We will identify relevant prescribed and non-prescribed stakeholders and write to them via email to introduce our proposals, inform them of the consultation and, where relevant, offer a briefing.

In the run-up to or at the start of our Stage 1 consultation, we will offer briefing meetings with the following stakeholders:

- Parliamentarians whose constituencies are inside the PCZ and SCZ
- Every elected member of the host Council (Cumberland Council)
- Elected members of the non-host Councils whose specific wards are inside the PCZ
- Parish councils/community councils whose areas are inside the PCZ
- Key prescribed consultees.

Stakeholders informed of the consultation will include, but not limited to:

- Elected members of non-host Councils whose specific wards are inside the SCZ
- Parish councils/ community councils whose areas are inside the SCZ
- Relevant community groups with a close geographical relationship to our proposals
- Third party groups such as business groups and transport groups
- Relevant interest groups including local heritage organisations and environmental groups
- Any individual who has 'registered for updates' to the English section of Cross Border Connection.

The project team will consider meeting with any stakeholders who request a meeting.

These stakeholders will be sent an email with information on Cross Border Connection in England, the Stage 1 consultation and how to provide feedback. We will also share a digital poster with information on our consultation events.

Public consultation

We are proposing to use a blend of digital and traditional engagement channels for this public consultation. This will involve using the project website and other digital tools to present information on Cross Border Connection in England and gather feedback on our proposals.

We remain committed to engaging with all stakeholders throughout the consultation period. We want to ensure that all our engagement and consultation is inclusive and will reach those who otherwise may not engage with us.

We also recognise that some people may not have access to or use of the internet. We have taken steps to ensure that paper copies of consultation documents are available either upon request or at specified locations along the route.

We will work with local authorities to ensure we have identified suitable locations for local information points and public information events and, wherever possible, aim to accommodate suggestions beyond venues and locations already identified.

Project consultation website

We will launch the project's consultation website so people can easily find information relevant to them.

The website will allow people to easily access and download project information and documents and find links to other resources that will also be available to view at a traditional public consultation event.

Function	Rationale
Document library	The library will ensure that all project information is available in one, easy to access location.
Consultation pages to display all relevant information and material being presented for consultation	Project information will be laid out in a simple, visual and interactive format, with pointers and instructions throughout to aid easy navigation.
Find out more page	Details of dates and timings of public information events and webinars during the consultation period.
FAQs	This will help visitors to find answers to frequently asked questions.
Project contact details	Telephone, email and freepost details are on the website and in all consultation materials for the public to get in contact, request further details or ask questions.
Feedback Form	The online form will enable members of the public to provide their feedback easily and send it back directly to the project team.
Interactive map	Shows the locations of Option A and Option B for the preferred overhead line route and substation and supporting points of interest, such as the ability to zoom to specific locations using a postcode function.

Consultation events

A programme of public information events and community webinars will provide stakeholders opportunities to find out more about the proposals and to provide feedback.

Both in person and online webinar events will be held over a number of weeks during the consultation to provide multiple opportunities for people to take part.

Public information events

Public information events are organised to be accessible to as many stakeholders as possible and held at suitable venues. These events will provide the opportunity to speak to technical experts within the team.

We will hold multiple in-person public information events in suitable and accessible venues located within or near to the PCZ or SCZ and these events will be advertised via the consultation's publicity materials, where appropriate.

Public information events

Address	Location
Crosby-on-Eden Parish Hall , Crosby-on-Eden, Carlisle, CA6 4QN	Saturday 25 October, 11am – 4pm
Nicholforest Public Hall , Warwicksland, Penton, CA6 5QD	Tuesday 28 October, 2pm – 7pm
Wetheral Village Community Hall , Cumwhinton Road, Wetheral, Carlisle, CA4 8HE	Saturday 1 November, 2pm – 7pm
The Rockcliffe Centre , Rockcliffe, Carlisle, CA6 4AA	Tuesday 4 November, 2pm – 7pm
Wreay Village Hall , Wreay, Carlisle, CA4 0RL	Thursday 6 November, 2pm – 7pm
Longtown Memorial Hall Community Centre , Arthuret Road, Longtown, Carlisle, CA6 5SJ	Saturday 8 November, 11am – 4pm

If for unforeseen circumstances a public information event cannot take place then National Grid will seek to arrange an alternative event, where practical, and communicate the change via appropriate and practical means.

We take the safety and security of National Grid's team and members of the public seriously. We will take appropriate health and safety measures when planning and delivering events.

Community webinars

We will hold online webinars for the public. These will consist of a presentation from the project team, followed by a Q&A session. The webinars will cover specific parts of the proposed route.

Registration links for the community webinars will be available on the project website and will be sent via email on request.

Community webinars

Webinar name	Sections	Date and time
Webinar #1	Section 1 – England-Scotland border to B6318 Section 2 – B6318 to Rae Burn Section 3 – Rae Burn to Woodlands Industrial Park	Tuesday 11 November, 7pm – 8pm
Webinar #2	Section 4 (Option A) – Woodlands Industrial Park to A689 (including north of Carlisle substation) Section 4 (Option B) – Woodlands Industrial Park to A689	Thursday 30 October, 12pm – 1pm
Webinar #3	Section 5 – A689 to Scotby Section 6 – Scotby to Cocklakes Yard (including south of Carlisle substation)	Friday 14 November, 12pm – 1pm
Webinar #4	General - overview of proposals	Monday 17 November, 7pm – 8pm

These webinars will be advertised via the consultation publicity materials/activities, where appropriate.

Community webinars will be organised to enable the project team to present information on Cross Border Connection to a large number of interested residents and stakeholders.

The webinars will be recorded and made available on the project website for playback for those who cannot attend the webinar sessions.

Local information points

We will place paper copies of key documents at suitable, publicly accessible venues located within or near to the PCZ or SCZ.

Venue	Address	Opening times
Carlisle Library	11 Globe Lane, Carlisle, CA3 8NX	Monday 9am – 5:30pm Tuesday 10am – 5:30pm Wednesday 9am – 5:30pm Thursday 9am – 5:30pm Friday 9am – 5:30pm Saturday 9am – 4pm Sunday Closed
Longtown Library	Lochinvar Centre, Longtown, CA6 5UG	Monday 1 – 5pm Tuesday Closed Wednesday 10am – 2pm Thursday Closed Friday 1 – 5pm Saturday Closed Sunday Closed
Harraby Library Link	Harraby Community Centre, Edgehill Road, Carlisle, CA1 3SN	Monday 9am – 5pm Tuesday 9am – 5pm Wednesday 9am – 5pm Thursday 9am – 5pm Friday 9am – 5pm Saturday Closed Sunday Closed
Brampton Library	1 Market Place, Brampton, CA8 1NW	Monday 2 – 5pm Tuesday Closed Wednesday 10am – 12pm & 2 – 5pm Thursday 2 – 5pm Friday 2 – 5pm Saturday 10am – 1pm Sunday Closed

Paper copies of the Stage 1 Consultation Document, Feedback Form and Consultation Community Newsletter will be available to take away from the local information points. Reference only copies of the Strategic Options Report (SOR) and Corridor Preliminary Routeing and Siting Study (CPRSS) will be available to view at the local information points. Documents are subject to availability.

These local information points will be advertised via the consultation publicity materials/activities, where appropriate.

Opening times for local information points venues can be subject to short notice change and we recommend that people check with venues before visiting.

Contact methods

Contact details including a phone line, email address and Freepost address will be widely publicised, including in paper copies of consultation publicity materials and on the website.

When publicising the consultation, where appropriate, we will provide our project contact information and encourage individuals to contact the team via these channels.

Method	Contact details
Email	crossborderconnection@nationalgrid.com
Phone	0800 358 1781
Freepost	FREEPOST NATIONAL GRID CBC

Please note, the phone line will only be in operation between 9am to 5pm on weekdays. Outside of those hours there will be an answerphone function.

For the Freepost address, no stamp or further address details are required.

Providing feedback on our proposals

We want to make providing feedback easy and accessible for anyone with an interest in our proposals.

An online Feedback Form will be available on our project website.

We will also provide paper copies of our Feedback Form. These will be available at public information events, at local information points and we will send paper copies to those who contact us with requests.

Completed paper copy Feedback Forms can be posted to our Freepost address or handed to us at our public information events.

We will also accept comments via email to our project email address and via letter to our Freepost address.

If for any reason someone is unable to provide written feedback, we may be able to take feedback over the phone. This will be decided on a case-by-case basis.

Landowner engagement

Potentially impacted landowners will receive the same information as all other addresses within the PCZ. In addition to this, our dedicated Lands team and their appointed consultants will manage all engagement with potentially impacted landowners. However, it is important to underscore that whilst landowners may be written to at an early stage, it may not mean that they will have land impacted by the scheme.

Accessibility and seldom heard groups

Seldom heard groups are defined as being inaccessible to most traditional and conventional methods for consultation for any reason. We recognise that some people and groups may not have access to, or use of the internet or be able to access traditional consultation easily.

To ensure our consultation is accessible to all, we will:

- Directly mail a consultation newsletter to all addresses with postcodes within the PCZ and provide details of how to access digital and paper copies of other consultation documents, and how to provide feedback
- Make consultation information available in digital and non-digital formats
- Make paper copies of key consultation materials available at local information points, along with contact details for the project team who will be able to provide further assistance and send consultation materials to those who are unable to access these online
- Make information available in alternative languages and formats (e.g. large-print, braille), on request
- Advertise the consultation and project contact details through a variety of traditional and digital methods.

Reporting on the consultation

All feedback we receive as part of our Stage 1 consultation will be carefully considered as we develop our early proposals.

At Stage 2 consultation, we will provide a full consultation feedback report and will detail how the feedback from the Stage 1 consultation has shaped and influenced the proposals. Stage 2 consultation will provide a further opportunity to share your views on our updated proposals.

Map of consultation zones

