

VIP Policy review 2017

Summary of review process

The Visual Impact Provision Policy (the “VIP Policy”) was published by National Grid in 2013. The policy sets out the way in which we propose to make use of the £500m VIP allowance made available by Ofgem to reduce the visual impact of electricity infrastructure in nationally important landscapes in England and Wales. It contains the five guiding principles that underpin our VIP Project.

The review

In the VIP Policy we commit to reviewing the policy in 2017 to ensure it that is remains fit for purpose. We began the review in September 2017, with the involvement of stakeholders including project’s Stakeholder Advisory Group (SAG). The SAG is formed of senior representatives from organisations dedicated to enhancing the landscape throughout England and Wales as well as Ofgem and National Grid itself. The SAG advises the project on key decisions and the most effective ways to engage with local stakeholders.

The review was carried out in a series of stages, as described in the table below, concluding in April 2018 with the publication of an updated policy document.

| VIP Policy review stage | Date | |
|-------------------------|---|----------------|
| 1 | National Grid’s internal review of the policy finds that it is still fit for purpose and does not require any substantive revision, however some minor updates are needed | September 2017 |
| 2 | Policy review consultation launched with SAG members, stakeholders in each of the project areas, AONBs, National Parks and the public | October 2017 |
| 3 | National Grid’s suggested policy updates and responses received to the consultation discussed by the SAG at their November 2017 meeting | November 2017 |
| 4 | National Grid makes updates to the policy | December 2017 |
| 5 | Updates to the policy confirmed to the SAG in writing | January 2018 |
| 6 | National Grid confirms updates to the policy with Ofgem in accordance with the terms of our licence | February 2018 |
| 7 | Ofgem acknowledges the updates to the policy | March 2018 |
| 8 | National Grid update the policy document and upload it to the National Grid website concluding the policy review | April 2018 |

Updates to the policy

We made the following updates to the VIP Policy document as a result of the review:

- Removing the word ‘new’ in relation to the VIP allowance
- Adding more detailed references to the relevant planning policy frameworks
- Providing more details of the Landscape Enhancement Initiative
- Stating that the Landscape and Visual Assessment Methodology conforms the GLVIA.3 (the industry standard for such assessments)
- Updating the second guiding principle to include reference to the natural and historic environment
- Changing the reference to English Heritage to Historic England to reflect their name change
- Updating photographs, hyperlinks to background and supporting documents, and contact details where they have changed

Updated policy document

A copy of our updated VIP Policy document, dated December 2017, can be downloaded from our website www.nationalgrid.com/VIP.