

Bicker Fen Substation Works - Triton Knoll Connection

Frequently Asked Questions – Spring 2019

[About the site](#)

Q: Why are you doing this work?

A: We need to install some additional equipment at our substation at Bicker Fen to connect the proposed new Triton Knoll wind farm to the National Grid network.

Q: What work is needed?

A: We need to install some additional equipment (connection bays, isolator bays and switches) within the existing substation site to connect the wind farm to the National Grid network.

Q: How long will the work take?

A: We'll start work in September 2018. We expect to complete the work to reconfigure the substation in time to provide supplies to Triton Knoll in February 2020.

Q: Does National Grid need planning permission?

A: No. This work is classed as 'permitted development', under the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015. This allows providers of essential infrastructure, like National Grid, to undertake certain works without needing to submit applications for planning permission. This includes works to existing electricity and gas sites, including the installation of plant and equipment.

[Community impacts](#)

Q: Will the work be noisy?

A: Possibly at times. We need to dig some deep concrete foundations. We'll do that using continuous flight auger piling in November/December 2018. This type of piling is the quietest and fastest method, but may still cause some noise. The remainder of the work is general construction activity which won't be particularly noisy. Our contractors will regularly monitor noise to ensure it stays within the levels permitted under local environmental health requirements.

Q: What will we see while you're at work?

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A: You'll see our traffic management signs on the roads around Bicker and the A52. The signs will direct construction traffic away from the village and prevent access to local roads that don't form part of the Traffic Management Plan route. Works vehicles will travel from the private access track along Ing Drove a short distance and onto Cowbridge Road before reaching the substation via Vicarage Drove.

Q: What are your working hours?

A: Normal working hours will be between 7am and 6pm Monday to Friday. We'll also work between 7am and 6pm on Saturday and Sunday on alternate weekends, starting from 11 May until 29 September 2019.

HGV traffic will be limited to 9am – 5.30pm Monday to Friday and at no time during weekends or Bank Holidays.

Q: Will there be local power cuts while the works are carried out?

A: No. The work will have no impact on your electricity supply. The work that we need to carry out is on part of the national transmission system and has no direct effect on homes, businesses, schools and other premises in the local area.

Q: Do you need access to my land?

A: We don't need to access any privately-owned land for this work.

Q: Will you be surveying properties along Cowbridge Road and Ing Drove before starting work?

A: There are no plans to survey any properties. The work we are doing is not expected to have any structural impact on houses along either Ing Drove or Cowbridge Road.

Traffic

Q: Will construction vehicles travel through Bicker village when work starts?

A: No. Construction traffic won't travel through Bicker village where the roads are narrow and where people live. Instead, we'll use the existing access track that runs between the A52 and Ing Drove, past Friest Lane. Temporary construction traffic signage will restrict access to roads into the village and direct construction traffic to the Traffic Management Plan route. This means all construction traffic will bypass the village.

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Q: How will you minimise traffic disruption to people using Ing Drove and Cowbridge Road?

A: We're developing a strict Traffic Management Plan in agreement with Lincolnshire County Council, the local highway authority, to make sure we minimise disruption to the local community. We'll provide clear signage to make sure our construction traffic uses the agreed route and stays within the speed restrictions for construction traffic. We'll emphasise to our employees and contractors the special care they need to take when driving to and from the area.

We'll also use a marshalling system so construction vehicles don't have to pass one another along Ing Drove/ Cowbridge Road/Vicarage Drove to get to/from the substation.

Smaller deliveries (including mail) can be left at the holding area for inclusion on another vehicle going to site.

Q: What do I do if I see a works vehicle speeding?

A: We'll have a strict Traffic Management Plan in place. This clearly identifies the roads project traffic can use and imposes lower than legal speed limits for construction traffic. All our staff and contractors are fully briefed on the Traffic Management Plan before starting work on the project.

We take a zero-tolerance approach to contractors or staff who don't follow the traffic management plan. We'll conduct our own regular visible speed controls in the local area. Vehicles for the substation site will clearly display a National Grid sign in the windscreen. We encourage local residents to call our community relations line with details of any vehicles suspected of breaking the traffic management plan.

Q: What will you do to keep roads clean?

A: The works don't involve much excavation. This, combined with our one-way marshalling system, means we expect little mud to be tracked onto Cowbridge Road/ Ing Drove. We'll have a road sweeper out regularly to keep Ing Drove, Cowbridge Road and Vicarage Drove clean.

Q: Are there plans for any road or footpath closures or traffic management?

A: We won't need to close any roads or footpaths. Arrangements for the management of construction traffic will be set out in a construction traffic management plan. This is being put together in consultation with Lincolnshire County Council, the local highway authority.

Q: What will you do about the damage to grass verges on Ing Road and Cowbridge Road?

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A: We will ensure all damaged verges along Ing Road and Cowbridge Road are repaired in the spring, when the weather and ground conditions are suitable.

Construction

Q: Why is piling needed?

A: Some concrete foundations are needed for the new equipment. We'll use continuous flight auger (CFA) piling, which is the quietest and fastest method of installing the new piles that we need. The piling work is scheduled for between October 2018 and February 2019. Thereafter, the remainder of the work is general construction activity which won't be particularly noisy.

Q: Will piling be noisy?

A: The type of piling we'll be using is continuous flight auger piling, which is the quietest and fastest method available. There may still be some noise associated with the piling activity, but noise levels will depend on the distance from the piling. The existing planting around the substation will help reduce the impact of piling noise.

Environmental

Q: How will you protect the environment while the work is carried out?

A: We carefully consider potential environmental effects to make sure that we minimise or avoid potential impacts on the environment as much as we can. This takes place at the beginning of each project and as we plan the works. Our ecologists carry out ongoing surveys to establish if there are protected species on site and if there are any special measures or restrictions we need to put in place to safeguard plants and wildlife. For example, if we start work in September, birds will have finished nesting and raising their young.

Q: Is it necessary to clear birds' nests and vegetation?

A: We'll need to clear some scrub bushes from the area at the substation where our contractors will temporarily locate their cabins and parking. We'll undertake any work to clear vegetation outside the bird nesting season under the guidance of a trained ecologist.

Q: Will the vegetation be replaced?

A: The area our contractors will use will be needed for further connection work for the proposed Viking Link interconnector in the future. For this reason, and the fact this area was self-seeded, we don't envisage replanting.

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Community relations

Q: How will you keep people informed?

A: We'll do everything we can to minimise disruption to you while we work in the area. We'll make sure you are kept up to date through direct notifications (for those residents along the route for construction traffic – Ing Drove and Cowbridge Road), our community update leaflets, a public information event and our project website. We'll also liaise directly with local people on any specific concerns. For the latest project information, visit nationalgrid.com/bickerfensubstation

Q: Who can I call if I have questions about the proposed work?

A: You can call our Community Relations team if you have any queries about the work. You can reach the team on 0800 073 1047. They're available daily from 7am – 7pm. Alternatively you can email nationalgrid@bickerfen.com

Location

Q: Why was Bicker Fen chosen for the connection/ Does it have to be here?

A: We looked carefully with Innogy Renewables at where National Grid could provide a connection for Triton Knoll. Connecting to the existing Bicker Fen substation represents the most efficient, coordinated and economical option to connect the offshore wind farm. This was considered as part of the consenting process for Triton Knoll. You can read about this in Triton Knoll's Interface Selection Assessment Report which is available on the Planning Inspectorate website: <https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/wp-content/ipc/uploads/projects/EN020019/EN020019-000377-8.18%20Triton%20Knoll%20Interface%20Selection%20Assessment%20Report.pdf>.

Q: Did you consider any alternative substation sites?

A: Triton Knoll presented information about the alternatives considered through their Development Consent Order application. You can read all about that in Triton Knoll's Interface Selection Assessment Report which is available on the Planning Inspectorate website <https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/wp-content/ipc/uploads/projects/EN020019/EN020019-000377-8.18%20Triton%20Knoll%20Interface%20Selection%20Assessment%20Report.pdf>

Future works and Viking Link

Q: What's happening with the Viking Link connection?

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A: Viking Link is currently seeking planning permission for their proposals from the four relevant local planning authorities. We understand Viking Link is looking to start construction in 2020 and to complete around 2023. We'll liaise with Viking Link to look at how our programmes align to connect Bicker Fen substation and Viking Link. However, it'll be necessary to carry out our works in those timescales.

Q: Is this the start of something bigger? Will you extend the size of the substation in the future/will there be further works?

A: There are currently no plans for other connections at Bicker Fen. That said, we can't predict whether another party may or may not come along in the future. Any other connection would of course require planning consent in the same way that Triton Knoll and Viking Link have.

Electric and Magnetic Fields

Q: What are EMFs?

A: EMFs are electric and magnetic fields. Electric fields are produced by voltage and magnetic fields by current flowing through a conductor.

Q: How common are EMFs?

A: EMFs are produced wherever electricity is used or transmitted. They're produced by household wiring, electrical appliances, low-voltage distribution cables that carry electricity along streets and by high voltage power lines.

Q: Where do EMFs occur?

A: Background EMFs are present in most homes. They come from the house wiring, electrical appliances and the low-voltage distribution cables that carry electricity along streets.

Q: What's the difference between an electrical field and a magnetic field?

A: Electric fields depend on the operating voltage of the equipment producing them and are measured in V/m (Volts per metre). The voltage applied to equipment is a relatively constant value. Electric fields are shielded by most common building materials, trees and fences. Electric fields diminish rapidly with distance from the source.

Magnetic fields depend on the electrical currents flowing, which vary according to the electrical power requirement at any given time, and are measured in μT (microteslas). They are not significantly shielded by most common building materials or trees. Magnetic fields diminish rapidly with distance from the source.

Q: What measures does National Grid take to ensure the public is protected from the effects of EMFs?

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A: National Grid takes the issue of health very seriously. We believe it's right that the decision on what is acceptable or not is made by Public Health England rather than by us. Accordingly, we design all our equipment, overhead lines, cables and substations to comply with Public Health England's recommended exposure guidelines. A vast amount of research has been done into the possibility of health effects, without establishing any risks below these levels.

Q: What further information and/or research is available to the public on EMFs?

A: Further information is available in the booklet 'EMFs; The Facts' published by The Energy Networks Association (ENA) and on the dedicated National Grid EMFs website www.emfs.info

You can contact National Grid's EMF helpline on 0845 702 3270 or by email at emfhelpline@nationalgrid.com

Information is also available from the Health Protection Agency at www.hpa.org.uk

Q: Will the work proposed at Bicker Fen increase EMFs?

A: No. The work required to connect Triton Knoll will all take place within the existing substation compound and won't affect EMF levels outside the site.