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National Grid gears up for big dig as tunnel boring machine arrives on Humberside

160 metre long tunnel boring machine being delivered to Humberside to start year-long excavation beneath the River Humber

29 Nov 2017

- Components for 160 metre long tunnel boring machine arrive at Goxhill near Hull over two days next week
- The machine will excavate a 5km tunnel under the River Humber to carry a replacement gas pipeline
- Some delays for motorists on local roads during the slow moving deliveries from Immingham Docks

National Grid is gearing up to start its big dig under the River Humber with the parts for a 160 metre long tunnel boring machine arriving on site at Goxhill near Hull during Tuesday and Wednesday next week (5/6 December).

After it has been assembled on site early in the new year, the machine will begin a five kilometre, year-long journey under the river to emerge on the north bank at Paull. It will create a 3.65 metre diameter tunnel as it travels, around 35 metres below the river bed.

Once the tunnel is finished, a new 42 inch diameter gas pipeline will be laid inside it to replace an existing one. The gas pipeline which currently crosses the river is laid in a trench just below the river bed but is at risk of being exposed by shifting tides. Work has been carried out to keep it buried but the Humber Pipeline Replacement project offers a long-term solution.

Steve Ellison, Lead Project Manager said: "We've been planning this for months and are very excited about the prospect of the delivery of the machine so that we can make a start on the tunnel. We hope tunnelling will start early in the new year and we expect to see the machine emerge on the other side of the river around a year later."

National Grid has awarded the £100m contract to build the tunnel to a joint venture made up of Skanska, PORR Bau GmbH and A. Hak.

The tunnel boring machine has been built in Baden-Wurttemberg in Germany and, given its size, has been disassembled to make the journey to Goxhill near Hull. It will travel by road to Rotterdam, ship to Immingham Docks and then by road again to Goxhill.

The four largest sections of the 510 tonne machine will arrive in two separate deliveries on Tuesday and Wednesday next week (5/6 December). The deliveries will be moving through Goxhill between 12pm - 3pm on both days. As the vehicles are slow-moving, there will be some delays to motorists during this time. The delivery vehicles will then leave Goxhill between 5pm - 8pm using the same route.

The vehicles will travel from Immingham Docks to Goxhill along the A15 and B1206 via Barrow upon Humber. They will then progress along College Road, entering Goxhill via Thornton Road and on to National Grid's site via Ferry Road and East Marsh Road. This route has been carefully planned and agreed with the highway authorities and the police to make sure it is safe. The delivery vehicles will also be escorted by police officers.

People with questions about the delivery can contact National Grid via email at nationalgrid@riverhumberpipeline.com or by telephone on 0800 988 9144. There is also a project website: www.riverhumberpipeline.com.

Contact for media information only

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Notes for editors

Notes to Editors:

National Grid is pivotal to the energy systems in the UK and the north eastern United States. We aim to serve customers well and efficiently, supporting the communities in which we operate and making possible the energy systems of the future.

National Grid in the UK:

- We own and operate the electricity transmission network in England and Wales, with day-to-day responsibility for balancing supply and demand. We also operate, but do not own, the Scottish networks. Our networks comprise approximately 7,200 kilometres (4,474 miles) of overhead line, 1,500 kilometres (932 miles) of underground cable and 342 substations.
- We own and operate the gas National Transmission System in Great Britain, with day-to-day responsibility for balancing supply and demand. Our network comprises approximately 7,660 kilometres (4,760 miles) of high-pressure pipe and 618 above-ground installations.
- As Great Britain's System Operator (SO) we make sure gas and electricity is transported safely and efficiently from where it is produced to where it is consumed. From April 2019, Electricity System Operator (ESO) is a new standalone business within National Grid, legally separate from all other parts of the National Grid Group. This will provide the right environment to deliver a balanced and impartial ESO that can realise real benefits for consumers as we transition to a more decentralised, decarbonised electricity system.
- Other UK activities mainly relate to businesses operating in competitive markets outside of our core regulated businesses; including interconnectors, gas metering activities and a liquefied natural gas (LNG) importation terminal – all of which are now part of National Grid Ventures. National Grid Property is responsible for the management, clean-up and disposal of surplus sites in the UK. Most of these are former gas works.

Find out more about the energy challenge and how National Grid is helping find solutions to some of the challenges we face at <https://www.nationalgrid.com/group/news>

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