

Eastern Green Link 3 (EGL 3) and
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Soils and drainage

April 2024

Construction overview

Underground electricity cables are installed in trenches approximately 2.5m wide and are protected from accidental damage by a protective plastic tile and marker tape.

Cables are normally buried with 0.9m of material cover above the protective tile but could be buried deeper depending on the outcome of ground investigation surveys. Multiple cable trenches will be required along with a working corridor haul road for construction vehicles. All topsoil and sub-soil excavated will be stored and managed in accordance with our Soil Management Plan (SMP), the contents of which are outlined below.

When reinstating the land, the trenches will be backfilled, the haul road removed, and the working area levelled,

drained and loosened. We will aim to reinstate topsoil during favourable weather conditions on appropriately contoured and prepared ground. The topsoil of agricultural land will be left in a loose, friable and workable condition and wherever possible, to its original depth over the whole working area. Subsoil will generally be loosened with an agricultural cultivator to an appropriate depth where the topsoil has been removed.

The installation of underground electricity cables has the potential to affect agricultural land, soils and drainage systems. We understand the importance of soils and drainage and will prioritise them from the start of the project. We will consult, investigate, assess, design and install high quality land drainage and soil management, in collaboration with the landowner.

Management of soils

Soil and land quality assessments will be carried out along the route with soil sampling and analysis to comprehensively assess the topsoil and subsoil impacted by construction. A soil resources survey will establish a baseline record of the condition of the affected land and will include:

- information collected from landowner meetings
- a detailed soil survey in each field using handheld tools carried out by independent soil scientists and in accordance with published guidelines
- topsoil in each field will be sampled and tested at an accredited laboratory for pH, major plant nutrients, organic matter and particle size distribution and the results shared with each landowner
- Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) grades will be mapped across each affected land parcel and the land will be returned to its baseline ALC, therefore ensuring no loss or degradation of agricultural land.

This information will be developed into a comprehensive SMP for the project which will be submitted as part of the Development Consent Order (DCO) application and will be agreed with the Local Planning Authority (LPA) in advance of site work. The SMP will be developed in accordance with published guidelines, in particular the

Defra Construction Code of Practice for the Sustainable Use of Soils on Construction Sites (which requires a SMP to be developed and implemented) and the Institute of Quarrying's Good Practice Guide for Handling Soils in Mineral Workings (which is guidance recommended for all construction projects by Natural England).

This approach is in accordance with National Policy EN-5 and the National Policy Statement for Electricity Networks Infrastructure.



¹ Construction Code of Practice for the Sustainable Use of Soils on Construction Sites [gov.uk/government/publications/code-of-practice-for-the-sustainable-use-of-soils-on-construction-sites](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/code-of-practice-for-the-sustainable-use-of-soils-on-construction-sites)

² Good Practice Guide for Handling Soils in Mineral Workings www.quarrying.org/soils-guidance

³ National Policy Statement for electricity networks infrastructure (EN-5) [gov.uk/government/publications/national-policy-statement-for-electricity-networks-infrastructure-en-5](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-policy-statement-for-electricity-networks-infrastructure-en-5)

Management of land drainage

We are committed to ensuring that landowners will be provided with land drainage which is equivalent to pre construction access condition. This commitment will form an important part of any land rights agreement that National Grid will need to have in-place with each and every affected landowner and occupier.

National Grid will instruct suitably qualified, independent consultants to provide advice on agricultural land drainage affected by the project; this advice will run throughout the project development period and will support both the consenting and land rights processes. Regular meetings with landowners and occupiers will enable information sharing on drainage, help overcome any concerns regarding construction practices and enable collaborative working.

All Information gathered from landowner and occupier meetings, and from surveys, will be used to develop a conceptual land drainage design for the proposed project. This design will include a consideration of pre and post-construction land drainage for each landowner and occupier. The design will also be shared and discussed with landowners and occupiers.

Following construction and installation works, the Contractor will be responsible for the maintenance of the land drainage design; this will be for a prescribed defect period, usually five years. In the longer term, National Grid will assume responsibility for any repairs, or demonstrated losses from any defects in the land drainage design, within the easement strip, which is the land subject to National Grid land rights. Landowners will adopt and take full responsibility for the drainage outside the easement strip after the defect period.



Construction haul road formation

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