

AENC-NG-CNS-REP-0010

Norwich to Tilbury

PINS Pre-Application Planning Services - Programme Document

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Norwich to Tilbury

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1. Introduction

1.1 Introduction

- 1.1.1 This Programme Document has been prepared by National Grid Electricity Transmission plc (NGET) as a requirement under the Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects: 2024 Pre-application Prospectus in respect of the Norwich to Tilbury Project.

1.2 Purpose and Structure

- 1.2.1 This Programme Document sets out the timetable and describes the activities proposed to ensure an effective pre-application process, including the level of pre-application service requested from the Planning Inspectorate (PINS), and consultation with various parties required under the Planning Act 2008 as per the requirements for a Programme Document set out in Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects: 2024 Pre-application Prospectus. It is expected that this document will be updated at key milestones throughout the pre-application process as the Project is further developed.
- 1.2.2 This Programme Document is structured as follows:
- Section 1: Introduction and purpose and structure of the document
 - Section 2: Background to Norwich to Tilbury ('the Project')
 - Section 3: PINS Pre-application Service
 - Section 4: Expected Submission Timeframe
 - Section 5: Timeframe of the pre-application process
 - Section 6: Main issues for resolution
 - Section 7: Engaging with statutory consultees and Local Planning Authorities
 - Section 8: Pre-application risks and how these are tracked and managed
 - Section 9: Approach to preparing Preliminary Environmental Information (PEI).

2. Background to the Project

2.1 Overview of the Project

2.1.1 The Norwich to Tilbury Project (the Project) is a proposal by NGET to reinforce the high voltage electricity network in East Anglia. The reinforcement is needed because the existing transmission network, even with current upgrading, will not have sufficient capacity for the new renewable energy (a substantial proportion of which is generated by offshore wind) that is expected to connect to the network over the next ten years and beyond.

2.1.2 The current draft proposals for the Project comprise:

- a new 400 kilovolt (“kV”) electricity transmission connection of approximately 180 kilometres (“km”) in overall length from Norwich Main Substation via Bramford Substation and a new Tilbury North Substation, into Tilbury Substation comprising:
 - approximately 159 km of new overhead line supported on approximately 510 steel lattice pylons (approximately 50 metres (“m”) in height) some of which are gantries (typically up to 15 m in height) within proposed Cable Sealing End (“CSE”) compounds, or existing or proposed substations; and
 - approximately 22 km of 400 kV underground cabling some of which is located through the Dedham Vale National Landscape (formerly known as Dedham Vale AONB);
- seven new CSE compounds, each with a permanent access, to connect the overhead lines to the underground cables;
- a new 400 kV East Anglia Connection Node (“EACN”) substation, with a new permanent access, on the Tendring Peninsula. This is proposed to be an Air Insulated Switchgear (“AIS”) substation;
- a new 400 kV Tilbury North Substation to the south of Orsett Golf Course in Thurrock with access options. This is proposed to be a Gas Insulated Switchgear (GIS) substation;
- modifications to the existing National Grid Electricity Transmission overhead lines, including into and out of the new 400 kV Tilbury North and access options;
- substation extension works at the existing Norwich Main and Bramford substations to connect and support operation of the new transmission connection; and
- temporary works associated with the construction of the Project.

Third party utilities diversions and / or modifications would also be required to facilitate the construction of the Project.

2.1.3 Cable Sealing End (CSE) compounds include the equipment that connects overhead lines to underground cables. EACN refers to East Anglia Connection Node, the name given to a 400kV substation.

2.1.4 The Project falls within the administrative boundaries of the following local authorities:

- Norfolk County Council
- Suffolk County Council
- Essex County Council
- Thurrock Council
- South Norfolk Council
- Mid Suffolk District Council
- Babergh District Council
- Tendring District Council
- Colchester City Council
- Braintree District Council
- Chelmsford City Council
- Brentwood Borough Council
- Basildon Council.

2.2 Planning Act 2008

2.2.1 The Project is a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP), as defined by the Planning Act and the Planning Act 2008 (Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects) (Electricity Lines) Order 2013, as it involves the installation of an electric line above ground of more than 2km, which will operate at 400kV in England.

2.2.2 As an NSIP, the proposed Project would require the grant of development consent by the making of a Development Consent Order (DCO) under the Planning Act 2008.

2.2.3 For the purpose of section 115 of the Planning Act 2008, development consent may also be granted for associated development, which for this Project includes a new 400kV substation, cable sealing end compounds, underground cables, lower voltage diversions, and mitigation works.

3. PINS Pre-application Service

3.1 Pre-application Service

- 3.1.1 The Project falls under the 'Standard' level of pre-application service. It is considered the standard level of service will provide the project with an appropriate and proportionate level of pre-application engagement with PINS, reflective of the scale and nature of the project and NGET's level of experience as an applicant.
- 3.1.2 The Project is similar to others within the Great Grid Upgrade and as such, lessons learnt and expertise in producing documentation are available to enable the application to be of a standard acceptable for examination.
- 3.1.3 The standard level of service will provide the Project with project update meetings, draft document review and risk review.

4. Expected Submission Timeframe

- 4.1.1 The application for a DCO is expected to be submitted in Q3 2025.
- 4.1.2 The submission date timeframe will be refined as the period of submission draws closer. NGET will provide PINS with regular updates regarding the submission date as the project progresses.

5. Timeframe of the pre-application process

5.1.1 An anticipated timeline of the pre-application process is set out in Table 1 below. The pre application timeframe will be refined, and further detail added as required and as the period of submission draws closer.

Table 1 – Anticipated application submission timeframe

Activity	Timeframe (Status)
Non-Statutory Consultation	21 April – 22 June 2022 (Complete)
EIA scoping request	November 2022 (Complete)
Scoping Opinion	December 2022 (Complete)
Further Non-Statutory Consultation	27 June – 21 August 2023 (Complete)
Statutory Consultation	10 April 2024 – 26 July 2024 (Complete)
Project Update Meeting with PINS following Statutory Consultation	23 October 2024 (Complete)
Project Update Meetings with Local Planning Authorities (including key stakeholders) to discuss approach to Targeted Consultations	November 2024 – present date (ongoing)
Project Update Meeting with PINS prior to Targeted Consultations	14 January 2024 (Complete)
Further targeted consultations - a combination of statutory and non-statutory (community) consultations.	30 days consultations, starting 30 th January up to April 2025
Submission of draft emerging DCO documents for PINS review	10 th March 2025 (Complete)
Project Update Meeting with PINS	19 th March 2025 (Complete)
Project Update Meeting with PINS to review PINS comments on draft emerging DCO documents	20 th May 2025 (Planned)
Adequacy of Consultation Milestone Submission (AoCM)	May 2025 (Planned)
Project Update Meeting with PINS	June/July 2025 (Planned)
DCO submission	Q3 2025 (Anticipated)

6. Main issues for resolution

- 6.1.1 NGET has completed two rounds of Non-Statutory Consultation and Statutory Consultation was completed in Summer 2024.
- 6.1.2 As the project is at a relatively mature stage of development, the table below sets out the general issues in line with the following National Policy Statements (NPS) which are considered likely to be relevant to projects of this nature together with a description of the current consideration of this issue for the proposed Project:
- **Overarching National Policy Statement for Energy (EN-1) (NPS EN-1):** NPS EN-1 sets out the Government's overarching policy about the development of NSIPs in the energy sector. It emphasises the need for new energy projects to contribute to a secure, diverse, reliable and affordable energy supply;
 - **National Policy Statement for Electricity Networks Infrastructure (EN-5) (NPS EN-5):** NPS EN-5 is additional to NPS EN-1. Applicants and the Secretary of State should consider both NPS EN-1 and NPS EN-5 together.
- 6.1.3 As Statutory Consultation has now been completed, references to the Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR) have been included as an aide to a better understanding of the issues and their context (it is noted that the PEIR is one but not the only document relevant to the Statutory Consultation and the issues being addressed). The PEIR presents a preliminary assessment of the likely significant environmental effects of the Norwich to Tilbury Project, to inform consultation. The purpose of the PEIR is to enable members of the public, consultation bodies, and other stakeholders, to develop an informed view of the preliminary likely significant effects of the Project and comment on aspects of interest.
- 6.1.4 Further consideration will be given to these matters pending receipt of views of communities and stakeholders in relation to the emerging proposals following the Statutory Consultation.
- 6.1.5 An application for a DCO will be supported by documents explaining the consideration of issues arising from consultation and the application of the NPS's. An Environmental Statement will set out consideration of the Project's environmental effects.

Issue	Description of Issue
Air quality	<p>Chapter 10 of the PEIR considers potential effects arising due to air quality and emissions.</p> <p>The preliminary assessment concluded that effects would be not significant in relation to air quality receptors. Further assessments are being carried out and feedback from the consultation is being considered.</p>
Aviation and Defence	<p>The Project is in proximity to a small number of private airfields / airstrips. These have been considered during the detailed routeing as set out in the Development Report 2023¹ and the Design Development Report (2024)². Further assessments are being carried out and feedback from the consultation is being considered.</p>
Alternatives and Good Design	<p>Site and route selection and alternatives, including the application of the Holford and Horlock Rules.</p> <p>Chapter 3 of the PEIR sets out consideration of alternatives and Chapter 4, Section 4.4, of the PEIR describes the good design principles that have and will guide the design process.</p>
Biodiversity and Geological Conservation	<p>The consideration of potential effects on biodiversity is set out in Chapter 8 of the PEIR.</p> <p>Chapter 8 also sets out the preliminary assessment of potential effects on internationally, nationally, and locally designated sites of ecological or geological conservation importance, on protected species and on habitats and other species identified as being of principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity, including irreplaceable habitats.</p> <p>The preliminary assessment concluded that, with the implementation of mitigation measures, effects on all biodiversity receptors are likely to be not significant. There are two</p>

¹ <https://www.nationalgrid.com/electricity-transmission/document/149161/download>

² <https://www.nationalgrid.com/electricity-transmission/document/154371/download>

Issue	Description of Issue
	<p>exceptions to this as detailed in the PEIR and which are subject to ongoing review, assessment and consideration. These two areas relate to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction-related effects on the North Thames Estuary and Marshes Proposed Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) • Operational effects on Round Wood and Writtle-Writtlepark Wood
Climate Change Adaption and Resilience	Chapter 4, Section 4.4 of the PEIR sets out the 'Design Resilience to Climate Change' and Chapter 12 of the PEIR 'Hydrology and Land Drainage' considers flood risk.
Flood Risk	Mitigation to ensure no detrimental effects on flood risk from rivers and the sea or the functioning of flood defences the effect is anticipated to be not significant during both construction and operation. Further assessments are being carried out and feedback from the consultation is being considered.
Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions	Chapter 4, Section 4.4 of the PEIR sets out that <i>'The Project would support the UK's net zero target to achieve net zero emissions by 2050 through the connection in East Anglia of new low carbon energy generation, and by reinforcing the transmission network. Therefore, the operational, medium to long term benefits of delivering the Project on a national level are considered to outweigh any short-term impacts of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions because of material use and construction activities'</i> .
Health	<p>The consideration of potential effects on health and well-being is set out in Chapter 10 of the PEIR.</p> <p>The preliminary assessment concluded that effects would be not significant in relation to health and wellbeing. Further assessments are being carried out and feedback from the consultation is being considered.</p>
Historic environment	The consideration of potential effects on the historic environment is set out in Chapter 11 of the PEIR.

Issue	Description of Issue
	<p>The preliminary findings of the assessment identified that during the construction phase of the Project, significant temporary negative effects may be experienced on a number of designated heritage assets (including listed buildings, a scheduled monument, conservation areas and a registered park and garden) and significant residual permanent negative effects on a number of non-designated heritage assets.</p> <p>For operation and maintenance, the preliminary assessment identified several significant permanent negative effects to designated heritage assets (including listed buildings, a scheduled monument, conservation areas and a registered park and garden). Further assessments are being carried out and feedback from the consultation is being considered.</p>
Landscape and visual	<p>The consideration of potential landscape and visual effects is set out in Chapter 13 of the PEIR.</p> <p>Consideration of project design and routing has been carried out in accordance with the Holford and Horlock Rules, undergrounding and provision of appropriate landscape mitigation. Most of the residual effects on landscape and visual receptors during the construction phase are considered to be short to medium-term and largely reversible. During operation, the preliminary assessment concluded that effects on landscape character, views and visual amenity have the potential to have long-term significant effects in certain areas. Further assessments are being carried out and feedback from the consultation is being considered. In the longer term, mitigation measures including replacement planting and embedded mitigation within the 'Environmental Areas' around the CSE compounds and substations / substation extensions would reduce effects in some areas.</p>
Land use, including open space, green infrastructure, green belt Socio-economic impacts	<p>The potential effects on land use, socioeconomics, recreation and tourism are assessed in Chapter 15 of the PEIR.</p> <p>The preliminary assessment concluded that while there would be some temporary and permanent negative effects overall, the majority of effects would not be significant in</p>

Issue	Description of Issue
	relation to socioeconomics, recreation and tourism receptors. Further assessments are being carried out and feedback from the consultation is being considered.
Land rights and land interests	NGET is and will continue to engage with affected parties to secure the necessary land rights to deliver the project.
Noise and vibration	<p>The potential interaction between the Project and noise and vibration is assessed in Chapter 14 of the PEIR.</p> <p>The preliminary assessment concluded that, on the whole, effects would not be significant in relation to noise and vibration receptors. Further assessments are being carried out and feedback from the consultation is being considered.</p>
<p>Pollution control</p> <p>Dust, odour, artificial light, smoke, steam, insect infestation</p>	<p>Potential direct and indirect effects are set out in Chapter 7 Air Quality, Chapter 9 Contaminated land, Geology and Hydrogeology, Chapter 12 Hydrology and Land Drainage, Chapter 14 Noise and Vibration, Chapter 16 Traffic and Transport and Chapter 17 Cumulative Effects of the PEIR.</p> <p>The preliminary assessments for all topics, excluding Ecology and Biodiversity, (Chapters 7, 9, 12, 16 and 17) conclude that effects would be not significant. Further assessments are being carried out and feedback from the consultation is being considered.</p>
Traffic and transport	<p>The potential interaction between the Project and traffic and transport is assessed in Chapter 16 of the PEIR.</p> <p>The preliminary assessment concluded that, on the whole, residual effects (post mitigation) would not be significant. Further assessments are being carried out and feedback from the consultation is being considered.</p>
Water Quality and Resources	Potential effects on water quality are considered in Chapter 8 (Contaminated Land, Geology and Hydrogeology) and Chapter 12 (Hydrology and Land Drainage) of the PEIR

Issue	Description of Issue
	<p>The preliminary assessment concluded that effects from the construction and operational (and maintenance) phases would be not significant in relation to contaminated land, geology and hydrogeology.</p> <p>Any potential effects on water quality are considered to be temporary and localised and not significant. Further assessments are being carried out and feedback from the consultation is being considered.</p>

7. Engaging with statutory consultees and Local Planning Authorities

- 7.1.1 NGET began early engagement with the host Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) prior to the Non-Statutory Consultation in Spring 2022. Engagement has continued throughout the early stages of the Project including Non-Statutory Consultation (Spring 2022), EIA Scoping (November 2022), further Non-Statutory Consultation (Summer 2023) and Statutory Consultation (completed Summer 2024).
- 7.1.2 NGET wrote to Statutory Consultees to inform them of the Non-Statutory and Statutory Consultations. Prior to the Statutory Consultation NGET also consulted with the LPAs on a Statement of Community Consultation.
- 7.1.3 Feedback has been sought from the LPAs during the Non-statutory and Statutory Consultations.
- 7.1.4 NGET have entered into Planning Performance Agreements (PPA's) with a number of the host LPA's and are working towards signing PPA's with the other LPA's.
- 7.1.5 Following review of feedback received from Statutory Consultation there has been a series of project update meetings with Local Planning Authorities to discuss approach to further targeted consultations.
- 7.1.6 NGET conducted a workshop with host local authorities in March to further discuss their engagement leading up to the application submission date in Q3 2025.
- 7.1.7 In addition to engagement with the host authorities, NGET has and will continue to liaise with the statutory environmental bodies (Natural England, Historic England and the Environment Agency) and other organisations such as National Highways, Network Rail, utility companies, the National Trust, RSPB (the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds) and local interest groups such as the Wildlife Trusts. Service Level Agreements (SLA) or similar are agreed or being agreed with key statutory bodies, such as the Environment Agency, Historic England and a SLA is in place with Natural England, to ensure these organisations have the adequate resource to engage with the project at key times. Further information on engagement activities will be shared as required in the Consultation Report once developed post the processing and analysis of the Statutory Consultation.

8. Pre-application risks and how these are tracked and managed

8.1.1 The project is at a relatively mature stage of development with Statutory Consultation currently underway. A summary of the pre-applications risks at this stage and how these are tracked and managed is provided below:

Risk	Description of Risk	Tracking and managing risk
Lack of sufficient resource/capacity within host Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) to engage with proposals in detail	Limited resource and capacity of LPAs results in limited engagement on the proposals and inability for the LPAs to provide feedback throughout the pre-application stage of the project.	Early engagement with LPAs underway. NGET working with all host LPAs to seek to implement PPAs. Sharing of regular updates regarding project progress and programme.
Lack of sufficient resource/capacity within stakeholder organisations to engage with proposals in detail	Limited resource and capacity of some statutory consultees results in limited engagement on the proposals and inability for statutory consultees to provide feedback throughout the pre-application stage of the project, including Non-statutory and Statutory Consultations.	Early stakeholder engagement. Sharing of regular updates regarding project progress and programme. Where applicable NGET are working with specific consultees to implement paid pre-application services.
Multiple DCOs along/in close proximity to route placing stress on resources of Local Authorities	Numerous developments within proximity of the Project demand additional resource from Local Authorities which could reduce their ability to adequately engage with the Project proposals.	Early engagement with LPAs underway. Sharing of regular updates regarding project progress and programme.

9. Approach to Preliminary Environmental Information

- 9.1.1 A Preliminary Environmental Information Report has been prepared and published on the Project website as part of the Statutory Consultation materials³.
- 9.1.2 The approach and methodology is set out in Chapter 5 of the PEIR. The approach has been informed by the EIA Scoping Report (issued to the Planning Inspectorate in November 2022⁴) and the Scoping Opinion which was received in December 2022⁵⁶.

³ <https://www.nationalgrid.com/electricity-transmission/document/154446/download>

⁴ [https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/wp-content/ipc/uploads/projects/EN020027/EN020027-000012-EAGN%20-%20Scoping%20Report%20\(including%20appendices%20B%20to%20K\).pdf](https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/wp-content/ipc/uploads/projects/EN020027/EN020027-000012-EAGN%20-%20Scoping%20Report%20(including%20appendices%20B%20to%20K).pdf)

⁵ <https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/wp-content/ipc/uploads/projects/EN020027/EN020027-000009-EAGN%20-%20Scoping%20Opinion.pdf>

⁶ At the time of the Scoping Report and Scoping Opinion the Project was referred to as East Anglia Green Energy Enablement (GREEN)

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