



Department for
Energy Security
& Net Zero

Department for Energy Security &
Net Zero
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London
SW1A 2HP

Kerry Culley
By email: bilsbyfarlesthorpepc@live.co.uk

www.gov.uk

Our ref: TOB2024/05233

19 March 2024

Dear Kerry,

Thank you for your email of 7 March to the Secretary of State and attached letter addressed to National Grid, about the proposed Grimsby to Walpole project. The Secretary of State is grateful to you for having taken the time to write. I have been asked to respond on her behalf.

The Government expects annual electricity demand to increase from current levels by over 35% in 2035 and by over 70% in 2050. The energy industry, supported by the Government, is delivering a new mix of secure, home-grown and low-carbon energy generation to meet this demand. This new generation will require the re-wiring of Great Britain to transport power from new generators to homes and new infrastructure is required to reinforce and modernise the National Grid.

The Government does not make planning applications or choose precise locations for energy transmission infrastructure but does set the rules for a robust and independent planning process. The design and development of energy transmission infrastructure, including which technology would be used for construction of a project, is a matter for the developer, with the implications of that choice considered through the planning process.

Where onshore transmission infrastructure is required, the planning system requires every effort to be made to reduce impacts and ensure communities' concerns are taken into account. For example, in sensitive areas such as Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and National Parks, the presumption remains that any transmission cables which cannot avoid the areas are undergrounded. All projects are required to progress through the planning process which includes statutory consultations and proposals are independently reviewed.

Developers must also consider the impacts of offshore infrastructure in terms of its cost, environmental and marine user impact in the same manner as they consider onshore infrastructure. The lifetime cost for offshore cabling, as well as high maintenance costs, means the starting presumption for new energy transmission infrastructure projects remains onshore. This cost is borne by electricity bill payers and must be considered when designing network infrastructure, as well as environmental and community impacts.

The Government does recognise the potential impact of infrastructure on local communities and is engaged in ensuring that this is reduced and mitigated as far as possible. As part of our commitment to ensure communities are central to network infrastructure development, we have announced a generous package of community benefits which will deliver bill discounts and community funding to those living near this vital infrastructure (up to £10,000 in bill discounts per property, and community benefits of

£200,000 per km of overhead lines or per substation or £40,000 per km of underground cabling).

Given the role of the Secretary of State in determining Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project applications for development consent, the Department cannot comment on specific concerns regarding a proposed infrastructure project to avoid prejudicing the decision-making process. I can assure you that in taking the decision, the Secretary of State will consider a range of factors relevant to any development consent application.

Thank you once again for writing. I hope this response is helpful.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'L Wood', written in a cursive style.

Lauren Wood
DESNZ CORRESPONDENCE UNIT