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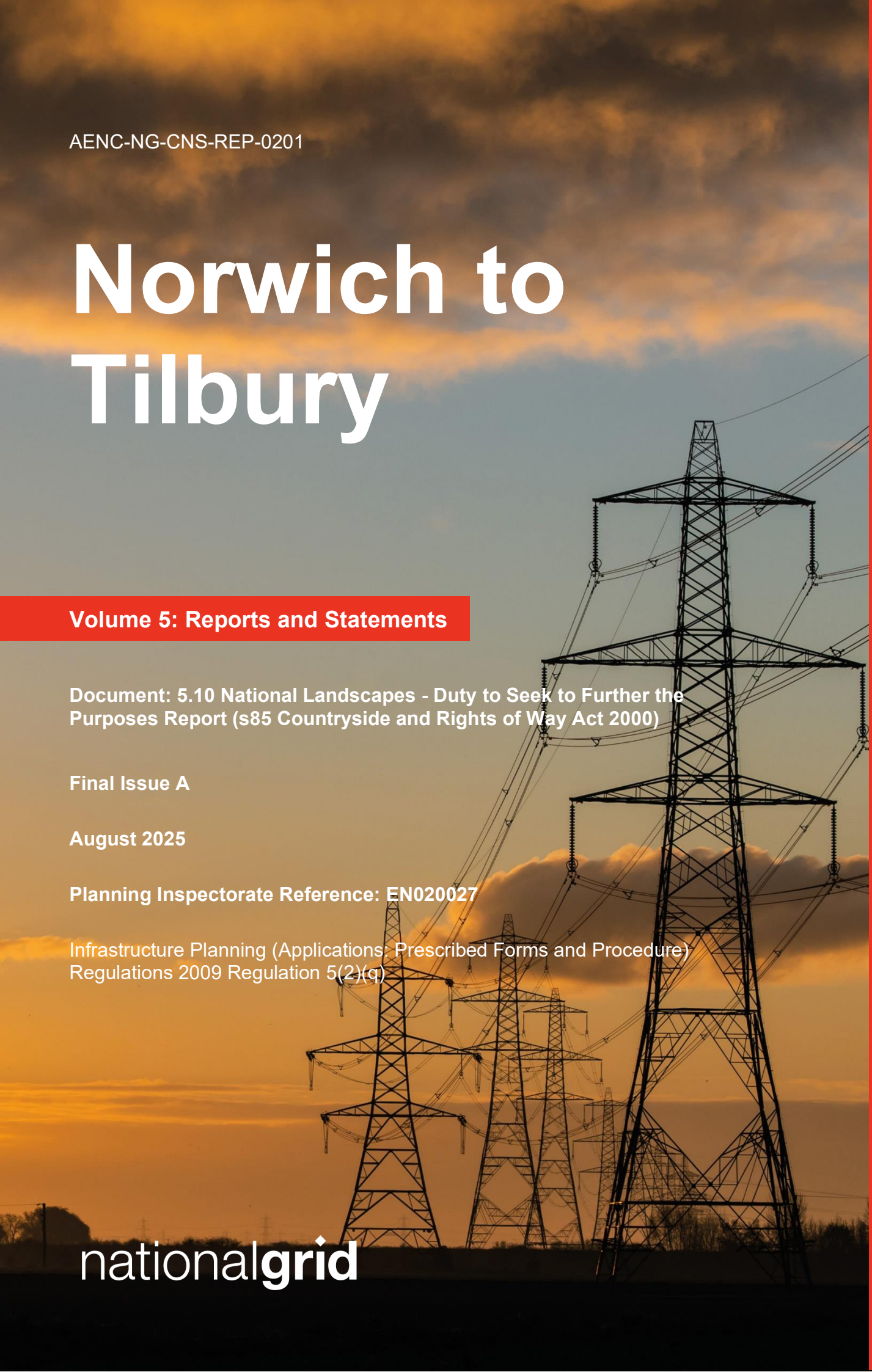
Norwich to Tilbury



Volume 5: Reports and Statements

Document: 5.10 National Landscapes - Duty to Seek to Further the Purposes Report (s85 Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000)

Final Issue A

August 2025

Planning Inspectorate Reference: EN020027

Infrastructure Planning (Applications: Prescribed Forms and Procedure) Regulations 2009 Regulation 5(2)(q)

nationalgrid

Contents

1. Introduction

1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 This document sets out the current status of National Grid's consideration of its duty to seek to further the purpose of the National Landscape, which is to 'conserve and enhance natural beauty' in accordance with section 85 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CRoW Act).

1.2 Overview

1.2.1 National Grid Electricity Transmission plc ('National Grid') owns and maintains the national high voltage electricity transmission network throughout England and Wales.

1.2.2 The transmission network connects the power from where it is generated to the regional Distribution Network Operators who then supply businesses and homes.

1.2.3 National Grid holds the Transmission Licence for England and Wales, and its statutory duty is to develop and maintain an efficient, coordinated and economical system of electricity transmission and to facilitate competition in the generation and supply of electricity, as set out in the Electricity Act 1989.

1.2.4 National Grid has developed plans for Norwich to Tilbury (referred to as the 'Project' in this document). The Project would support the UK's net zero target through the connection of new low carbon energy generation in East Anglia and by reinforcing the transmission network.

1.2.5 The Project comprises reinforcement of the transmission network between the existing Norwich Main Substation in Norfolk and Tilbury Substation in Essex, via Bramford Substation, the new East Anglia Connection Node (EACN) Substation and the new Tilbury North Substation.

1.2.6 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 would be generated by offshore wind) that is expected to connect to the network over the next 10 years and beyond. Completion of the Project, together with other new reinforcements across the country, will meet this future energy transmission demand both in East Anglia and across the UK.

1.2.7 The Project is identified as critical to delivering a network which supports the clean power pathways for 2030 delivery.

1.2.8 Further detail in relation to the need for the Project is set out in the Planning Statement (document reference 5.6).

1.3 Project Description

1.3.1 The Project is a proposal by National Grid to upgrade the electricity transmission system in East Anglia between Norwich and Tilbury, comprising:

- A new 400 kilovolt (kV) electricity transmission connection of approximately 180 km overall length from Norwich Main Substation to Tilbury Substation via Bramford Substation, a new EACN Substation and a new Tilbury North Substation, including:
  - Approximately 159 km of new overhead line supported on approximately 509 pylons, either standard steel lattice pylons (approximately 50 m in height) or low height steel lattice pylons (approximately 40 m in height) and some of which would be gantries (typically up to 15 m in height) within proposed Cable Sealing End (CSE) compounds or existing or proposed substations
  - Approximately 21 km of 400 kV underground cabling, some of which would be located through the Dedham Vale National Landscape (an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB))
- Up to seven new CSE compounds (with permanent access) to connect the overhead lines to the underground cables
- Modification works to connect into the existing Norwich Main Substation and a substation extension at the existing Bramford Substation
- A new 400 kV substation on the Tendring Peninsula, referred to as the EACN Substation (with a new permanent access). This is proposed to be an Air Insulated Switchgear (AIS) substation
- A new 400 kV substation to the south of Orsett Golf Course in Essex, referred to as the Tilbury North Substation (with a new permanent access). This is proposed to be a Gas Insulated Switchgear (GIS) substation
- Modifications to the existing National Grid Electricity Transmission overhead lines to facilitate the connection of the existing network into the new Tilbury North Substation to provide connection to the Tilbury Substation
- Ancillary and/or temporary works associated with the construction of the Project.

1.3.2 In addition, third party utilities diversions and/or modifications would be required to facilitate the construction of the Project. There would also be land required for environmental mitigation and Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG).

1.3.3 As well as the permanent infrastructure, land would also be required temporarily for construction activities including, for example, working areas for construction equipment and machinery, site offices, welfare, storage and temporary construction access.

1.3.4 The Project would be designed, constructed and operated in accordance with applicable health and safety legislation. The Project will need to comply with design safety standards including the Security and Quality of Supply Standard (SQSS), which sets out the criteria and methodology for planning and operating the National Electricity Transmission System (NETS). This informs a suite of National Grid policies and processes, which contain details on design standards required to be met when designing, constructing and operating assets such as those proposed for the Project.

1.3.5 The construction and operation (and maintenance) elements of the Project are shown on the Environmental Statement (ES) Figure 4.1: Proposed Project Design (document reference 6.4.F1) and Figure 4.2: Proposed Project Design – Permanent Features (document reference 6.4.F2).

1.3.6 The Project has been broken down into eight sections based largely on local authority boundaries. The eight sections are described below and presented within the ES Figure 1.1: Site Location Plan and Project Sections (document reference 6.1.F1).

- Section A – South Norfolk Council
- Section B – Mid-Suffolk District Council
- Section C – Babergh District Council, Colchester City Council and Tendring District Council
- Section D – Colchester City Council
- Section E – Braintree District Council
- Section F – Chelmsford City Council and Brentwood Borough Council
- Section G – Basildon Borough Council and Brentwood Borough Council (and part of Chelmsford City Council)
- Section H – Thurrock Council.

1.3.7 Part of the route alignment in Section C passes through the Dedham Vale National Landscape and its setting. The setting of the Dedham Vale National Landscape also extends into areas in Section D. Figure 13.1: LVIA Study Area and Landscape Designations (document reference 6.13.F1) within the Chapter 13: Landscape and Visual of the ES shows the designation in relation to the Project Order Limits.

1.3.8 'National Landscapes' is the rebranded name for AONBs. Whilst the name is not statutory, the term National Landscapes will be used throughout this document.

1.4 Purpose and Structure of the Document

1.4.1 This document sets out the current status of National Grid's consideration of its duty, in relation to the Project, to seek to further the purpose of the National Landscape, which is to 'conserve and enhance natural beauty' in accordance with section 85 of the CRoW Act. This duty was introduced in 2023 and strengthens the previous version of section 85 of the CRoW Act which required relevant authorities to "have regard" to the statutory purpose of National Landscapes.

1.4.2 In December 2024 the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) published '*Guidance for relevant authorities on seeking to further the purposes of Protected Landscapes*' (Defra, 2024), which sets out how the Protected Landscape duty is intended to operate and provides broad principles to guide those in complying with it. The guidance has been taken into consideration and helped shape how National Grid has sought to fulfil the duty.

1.4.3 This document is structured as follows:

- Section 2: Legislative and Policy Context
- Section 3: National Landscapes

- Section 4: Project Design – National Landscapes
- Section 5: Assessment of Effects of the Project on the Dedham Vale National Landscape
- Section 6: Seek to Further the Purposes – Additional Measures Considered
- Section 7: Next Steps

2. Legislative and Policy Context

2.1 Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023 and Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000

2.1.1 Section 245 (Protected Landscapes) of the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023 (LURA) places a duty on relevant authorities, which in this context includes National Grid as a statutory undertaker, who must now seek to further the statutory purpose of Protected Landscapes (referred to as the 'seek to further' duty). In relation to National Landscapes, this requirement has been incorporated into section 85(A1) of the CRoW Act, which states:

'*In exercising or performing any functions in relation to, or so as to affect, land in an area of outstanding natural beauty in England, a relevant authority other than a devolved Welsh authority must seek to further the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the area of outstanding natural beauty*'.

2.1.2 This duty strengthens the previous version of section 85 of the CRoW Act which required relevant authorities to 'have regard' to the statutory purpose of National Landscapes.

2.2 Recent Case Law

2.2.1 The wording of the duty provides some qualifications to its use; the wording does not impose a duty to necessarily fulfil the purposes but states the relevant authority must seek to further the purposes. This was confirmed by Mr Justice Mould in a recent judgment regarding New Forest National Park Authority v Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government [2025].

2.2.2 The Mr Justice Mould also considered the duty in another recent judgment relating to Campaign for the Protection of Rural England (CPRE) v Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government [2025]. This case related to the legal challenge by CPRE to the decision to permit 165 homes in Kent within a National Landscape. The High Court confirmed within the judgment that the duty does not require a refusal of planning permission where there is residual harm to the National Landscape. Mr Justice Mould stated, '*The language of section 85(A1) of the 2000 Act imposes no prohibition on the grant of planning permission for development which fails to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of a protected landscape'*.

2.2.3 The approach set out by Mr Justice Mould in the New Forest National Park Authority and CPRE cases '*recognises that in a case where development is found to result in harm to the natural beauty of a protected landscape, the duty imposed by section 85(A1) of the 2000 Act requires certain matters to be addressed by planning decision-makers. It is an approach which is essentially reflected in the guidance issued by DEFRA in December 2024'*. He said matters should be expressed in terms of weight, and that the '*duty does not and is not intended to displace the established evaluative character of the determination of planning applications, which arises from the long-established principles that govern such decisions under sections 70 of the 1990 Act and 38(6) of the 2004 Act'.*

2.2.4 Whilst the above case law is related to decision making under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, the principles in relation to the seek to further duty are considered broadly applicable for decision making under the Planning Act 2008.

2.3 National Policy Statements

Overarching National Policy Statement for Energy (EN-1) (2024)

2.3.1 The legal duty is also reflected within the Overarching National Policy Statement for Energy (NPS EN-1) (Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ), 2024a) which states:

'*For development proposals located within designated landscapes the Secretary of State should be satisfied that measures which seek to further purposes of the designation are sufficient, appropriate and proportionate to the type and scale of the development'* (paragraph 5.10.7).

'*The duty to seek to further the purposes of nationally designated landscapes also applies when considering applications for projects outside the boundaries of these areas which may have impacts within them. In these locations, projects should be designed sensitively given the various siting, operational, and other relevant constraints. The Secretary of State should be satisfied that measures which seek to further the purposes of the designation are sufficient, appropriate and proportionate to the type and scale of the development*' (paragraph 5.10.8).

2.3.2 In terms of the applicant's assessment, NPS EN-1 paragraph 5.10.20 advises:

'*The assessment should include the effects on landscape components and character during construction and operation. For projects which may affect a National Park, The Broads or an AONB the assessment should include effects on the natural beauty and special qualities of these areas*'.

2.3.3 Paragraphs 5.10.26 and 5.10.27 consider mitigation.

'*Reducing the scale of a project can help to mitigate the visual and landscape effects of the proposed project. However, reducing the scale or otherwise amending the design of a proposed energy infrastructure project may result in a significant operational constraint and reduction in function … In these circumstances, the Secretary of State may decide that the benefits of the mitigation to reduce the landscape and/or visual effects outweigh the marginal loss of function*'.

'*Adverse landscape and visual effects may be minimised through appropriate siting of infrastructure within its development site and wider setting. The careful consideration of colours and materials will support the delivery of a well-designed scheme, as will sympathetic landscaping and management of its immediate surroundings*'.

2.3.4 In relation to the Secretary of State's decision making, NPS EN-1 paragraph 5.10.32 confirms that development consent in nationally designated landscapes can only be granted in exceptional circumstances and should be demonstrated to be in the public interest.

'*When considering applications for development within National Parks, the Broads and AONBs the conservation and enhancement of the natural beauty should be given substantial weight by the Secretary of State in deciding on applications for development consent in these areas. The Secretary of State may grant development consent in these areas in exceptional circumstances. Such development should be demonstrated to be in the public interest and consideration of such applications should include an assessment of:*

- *The need for the development, including in terms of national considerations, and the impact of consenting or not consenting it upon the local economy;*
- *The cost of and scope for, developing all or part of the development elsewhere outside the designated area or meeting the need for it in some other way, taking account of the policy on alternatives set out in Section 4.3; and*
- *Any detrimental effect on the environment, the landscape and recreational opportunities, and the extent to which that could be moderated*' (paragraph 5.10.32)

2.3.5 It is considered the Project meets the tests set out in paragraph 5.10.32 of NPS EN-1; further detail in relation to this is provided within the Planning Statement (document reference 5.6).

2.3.6 NPS EN-1 states that there is critical national priority (CNP) for the provision of nationally significant low carbon infrastructure. The Project is 'low carbon infrastructure*'* in the context of NPS EN-1.

2.3.7 On CNP infrastructure, paragraph 3.3.63 of NPS EN-1 states that '*Subject to any legal requirements, the urgent need for CNP Infrastructure to achieving our energy objectives, together with the national security, economic, commercial, and net zero benefits, will in general outweigh any other residual impacts not capable of being addressed by application of the mitigation hierarchy. Government strongly supports the delivery of CNP Infrastructure and it should be progressed as quickly as possible'.*

2.3.8 Paragraph 4.2.17 provides further clarification stating that '*This means that the Secretary of State will take as a starting point that CNP Infrastructure will meet the following, non-exhaustive, list of tests'*, which includes *'where development in nationally designated landscapes requires exceptional circumstances to be demonstrated'.*

2.3.9 Paragraphs 5.10.33 and 5.10.34 of NPS EN-1 are also relevant providing guidance to the Secretary of State.

'*For development proposals located within designated landscapes the Secretary of State should be satisfied that the measures which seek to further purposes of the designation are sufficient, appropriate and proportionate to the type and scale of the development. The Secretary of State should ensure that any projects consented in these designated areas should be carried out to high environmental standards, including through the application of appropriate requirements where necessary*'.

'*The duty to seek to further the purposes of nationally designated landscapes also applies when considering applications for projects outside the boundaries of these areas, which may have impacts within them. The aim should be to avoid harming the purposes of designation or to minimise adverse effects on designated landscapes, and such projects should be designed sensitively given the various siting, operational*

and other relevant constraints. The fact that a proposed project will be visible from within a designated area should not in itself be a reason for the Secretary of State to refuse consent'.

2.3.10 Paragraph 5.10.35 makes an important point noting that '*The scale of energy projects means that they will often be visible across a very wide area. The Secretary of State should judge whether any adverse impact on the landscape would be so damaging that it is not offset by the benefits (including need) of the project.*'

National Policy Statement for Electricity Networks Infrastructure (EN-5) (2024)

2.3.11 Paragraph 2.2.11 of the National Policy Statement for Electricity Networks Infrastructure (NPS EN-5) (DESNZ, 2024b) supports the contents of NPS EN-1 advising:

'Depending on the location of the proposed development, statutory duties under Section 85 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, Section 11A of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 (as amended by Section 62 of the Environment Act 1995), and Section 17A of the Norfolk and Suffolk Broads Act 1988 may be relevant. Applicants should note amendments to each of these provisions contained in Section 245 of the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023.'

2.3.12 Paragraph 2.9.20 of NPS EN-5 covers undergrounding, '*Although it is the government's position that overhead lines should be the strong starting presumption for electricity networks developments in general, this presumption is reversed when proposed developments will cross part of a nationally designated landscape (i.e. National Park, The Broads, or Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty)*'.

2.3.13 It goes on to state in paragraph 2.9.22, '*However, undergrounding will not be required where it is infeasible in engineering terms, or where the harm that it causes (see section 2.11.4) is not outweighed by its corresponding landscape, visual amenity and natural beauty benefits. Regardless of the option, the scheme through its design, delivery, and operation, should seek to further the statutory purposes of the designated landscape. These enhancements may go beyond the mitigation measures needed to minimise the adverse effects of the scheme*'. With paragraph 2.9.23 following stating, '*Additionally, cases will arise where – though no part of the proposed development crosses a designated landscape – a high potential for widespread and significant adverse landscape and/or visual impacts along certain sections of its route may result in recommendations to use undergrounding for relevant segments of the line*'.

Revisions to National Policy Statements

2.3.14 In April 2025, the government launched a consultation on proposed changes to NPSs EN-1, EN-3 and EN-5 that ended on 29 May 2025. The consultation covers updates to all three NPSs for new energy infrastructure:

- Draft: Overarching National Policy Statement for Energy (EN-1) (DESNZ, 2025a)
- Draft: National Policy Statement for Renewable Energy Infrastructure (EN-3) (DESNZ, 2025b).
- Draft: National Policy Statement for Electricity Networks Infrastructure (EN-5) (DESNZ, 2025c)

2.3.15 The key changes consulted upon in the draft 2025 updates to the energy infrastructure NPSs include alignment with Clean Power 2030 targets and endorsement of the Centralised Strategic Network Plan. The 2025 revisions have strengthened the process for delivering major new infrastructure, reinforcing the government's ambition to deliver Clean Power by 2030.

2.3.16 The transitional provisions on the status of the draft 2025 revisions say:

'*While the review is undertaken, the current suite of energy NPS remain relevant government policy and EN-1 (DESNZ, 2024a) to EN-5 (DESNZ, 2024b) have effect for the purposes of the Planning Act 2008. The Secretary of State has decided that for any application accepted for examination before amending the energy NPSs, the current suite of energy NPS, published in 2024, should have effect. The amended energy NPSs will therefore only have effect in relation to those applications for development consent accepted for examination after the publication of the final amended energy NPSs…*'

2.3.17 At the point of submission of the Project, the NPSs designated in January 2024 were government policy. The application for development consent is accompanied by an ES (document reference 6.1 to 6.18) which provides the final assessment of the likely significant effects, associated with the Project during its construction and operation (including maintenance), after the mitigation hierarchy has been applied. The ES was prepared in accordance with the relevant requirements of National Policy Statements EN-1 and EN-5 in force as of 1 April 2025.

2.3.18 The emerging draft of the EN-1 reinforces the approach taken in the ES. The draft revised EN-1 and EN-5 reiterate the government's commitment to the Clean Power Action Plan 2030, which aims for at least 95% of the UK's electricity generation to come from clean sources by 2030 and emphasises the urgency and CNP of developing low-carbon infrastructure, thereby supporting the need case established in the ES.

2.3.19 The draft revised EN-1 and EN-5 maintain the assessment principles and generic impact considerations outlined in the current EN-1 and EN-5, ensuring continuity in evaluating environmental effects. They also introduce enhanced guidance on biodiversity, flood risk, and climate resilience and the mitigation hierarchy. The ES is considered to be in compliance with these emerging draft NPSs. The draft NPSs maintain the same policy requirement in relation to the seek to further duty as the current NPSs. The draft NPS EN-5 however includes specific reference in paragraph 2.11.5 that the '*Secretary of State must seek to further the purpose(s) of designated landscapes when making decisions which effect land within the designated area'*.

2.3.20 If the revised NPSs are designated prior to a decision being made on the application for development consent, the ES and Planning Statement will be reviewed for consistency with the newly designated NPSs, and any additional requirements would be captured within an errata document post submission.

2.4 Relevant Guidance

Dedham Vale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and Stour Valley Project Area Management Plan 2021-2026

2.4.1 Pursuant to section 89 of the CRoW Act, relevant local authorities should prepare and publish a plan which formulates their policy for the management of an AONB (National Landscape) and the carrying out of their functions in relation to it (section 89(2)). This shall be known as an '*area of outstanding natural beauty management plan*' (section 89(4)). For these purposes, a 'relevant local authority' is defined as '*in the case of an area of outstanding natural beauty which is wholly comprised in one principal area, the local authority for that area*' (section 89(11)).

2.4.2 In accordance with section 89, the Dedham Vale National Landscape and Stour Valley Partnership (DVNL Partnership) produces a management plan every five years on behalf of local authorities that operate across the Dedham Vale National Landscape (and Stour Valley).

2.4.3 The Dedham Vale AONB and Stour Valley Project Area Management Plan 2021 – 2026 (DVNP Partnership, 2021) sets out a vision for the National Landscape and guidance on how it should be managed. Section 3 of the Management Plan includes a series of objectives which are aimed at conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the National Landscape.

2.4.4 The 2021-2026 Management Plan explores a number of themes providing an aim and series of objectives for each theme. The aims of the Management Plan include the following:

- To conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the National Landscape and Stour Valley project area
- To conserve and enhance the characteristics of the built environment
- For the National Landscape and Stour Valley project area to appeal to all sections of society
- For the National Landscape and Stour Valley project area to contribute to mitigating climate change and wildlife recovery
- To have an ecologically sound river system that contributes to public good
- To conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the National Landscape and Stour Valley project area.

2.4.5 The aims and objectives of the Dedham Vale AONB and Stour Valley Project Area Management Plan 2021 – 2026 have been reviewed and considered as part of National Grid's approach to fulfilling the seek to further duty.

Draft Dedham Vale National Landscape and Stour Valley Project Area Management Plan 2026-2031 (2025)

2.4.6 In line with the requirement in the CRoW Act to review adopted and published plans at intervals not more than five years, the DVNL Partnership is currently undertaking this process.

2.4.7 The DVNL Partnership has produced a draft Management Plan covering the period 2026 – 2031 on behalf of the relevant local authorities (DVNL Partnership, 2025). The Management Plan is the subject of a public consultation between 8 July to 30 September 2025.

2.4.8 The draft plan includes five themes – Place, People, Nature, Climate and Drivers of Change. For each of these themes there is an associated strategy which is designed to support the delivery of the vision of the plan.

2.4.9 The likely adoption timeframe for the Management Plan, given the period it intends to cover (2026 to 2031), will be in advance of commencement of construction on the Project (from 2027). For this reason, the draft Management Plan has been given appropriate consideration as part of National Grid's approach to fulfilling the seek to further duty alongside the current adopted Management Plan.

Defra Guidance

2.4.10 A document titled '*Guidance for relevant authorities on seeking to further the purposes of Protected Landscapes'* was published by Defra in December 2024 (Defra, 2024) to provide guidance on how the Protected Landscapes duty set out in section 245 (Protected Landscapes) of the LURA which amends section 85 of the CRoW Act is intended to operate and provide broad principles to guide relevant authorities in complying with it.

2.4.11 The guidance (Defra, 2024) states what relevant authorities should do, explaining that the duty is an active duty, not passive, which means:

- *'a relevant authority should take appropriate, reasonable, and proportionate steps to explore measures which further the statutory purposes of Protected Landscapes*
- *as far as is reasonably practical, relevant authorities should seek to avoid harm and contribute to the conservation and enhancement of the natural beauty, special qualities, and key characteristics of Protected Landscapes*
- *a relevant authority should be able to demonstrate with proportionate, reasoned, and documented evidence the measures to which consideration has been given when seeking to further the statutory purposes of Protected Landscapes - for example, policies, strategies, operational procedures, estate management plans, investment plans, contracts, works instructions, assessments and reports which should be able to evidence the proper discharge of the duty by the relevant authority*
- *for ongoing functions, a relevant authority may consider it appropriate to instigate a formal compliance monitoring and reporting system to ensure adherence to the duty*
- *for development plan making and development management decisions affecting a Protected Landscape, a relevant authority should seek to further the purposes of the Protected Landscape - in so doing, the relevant authority should consider whether such measures can be embedded in the design of plans and proposals, where reasonably practical and operationally feasible*

- *for the development and management of land, water and estates, relevant authorities should seek to further the purposes of the Protected Landscape when designing and undertaking these activities, where reasonably practical and operationally feasible*
- *for day-to-day activities, relevant authorities should seek to further the purposes of Protected Landscape when designing and undertaking these activities where reasonably practical and operationally feasible'*

2.4.12 This guidance (Defra, 2024) confirms that the Protected Landscapes duty applies (inter alia) in 'd*ecision making in respect of development management, planning applications and nationally significant infrastructure projects'*, '*when considering the appropriateness of avoidance, mitigation, and compensation measures'* and in '*functions outside of a Protected Landscape which may have an effect on land in a Protected Landscape'*.

2.4.13 The guidance states that relevant authorities should consider information contained in the Protected Landscape's Management Plan and seek dialogue with the Protected Landscape Team.

2.4.14 This guidance has been carefully considered and informed the approach taken to the seek to further duty by National Grid.

3. National Landscapes

3.1 Special Qualities of the Dedham Vale National Landscape

3.1.1 The Dedham Vale National Landscape is a lowland river valley landscape located on the Suffolk/Essex border. Figure 13.1: LVIA Study Area and Landscape Designations (document reference 6.13.F1) within Chapter 13: Landscape and Visual of the ES shows the designation in relation to the Project Order Limits.

3.1.2 A study by Alison Farmer Associates, *Dedham Vale AONB Natural Beauty and Special Qualities and Perceived and Anticipated Risks* (Alison Farmer Associates, 2016) provides evidence on the 'natural beauty and special qualities' of the National Landscape. It includes a detailed assessment of the factors which contribute to the natural beauty of the National Landscape and the relationship between them. It comments on the natural beauty indicators (or natural beauty characteristics) used as considerations as part of the Dedham Vale's National Landscape designation process. The study summarises the 'special qualities' as follows:

- *'Iconic lowland river valley associated with the artist John Constable RA, the views he painted are still recognisable today*
- *Historic villages with timber framed housing and prominent churches*
- *Valley bottom grazing marshes with associated drainage ditches and wildlife*
- *Naturally functioning River Stour with associated tributaries, meres, and historic river management features*
- *Semi natural ancient woodlands on valley sides with associated wildlife*
- *Traditional field boundaries intact and well managed*
- *Apparent and buried archaeology indicating millennia of human activity*
- *A sense of relative tranquillity*
- *Surprisingly long-distance views from higher ground along the valley in an area associated with large skies.'*

3.2 Dedham Vale National Landscape Setting Study

3.2.1 National Grid undertook a Setting Study which is located in Annex A: Dedham Vale National Landscape Setting Study of the National Landscape Assessment Study (document reference 6.13.A5). The study was requested by statutory consultees and considers the 'setting' of the Dedham Vale National Landscape in the context of overhead electricity transmission infrastructure. The purpose of the study was to identify areas of the landscape that form part of the setting of the National Landscape to inform the assessment of effects of the Project on the defined special qualities (natural beauty) of the National Landscape. The Project identified a gradual, rather than a hard boundary for the setting of the Dedham Vale National Landscape.

3.2.2 The north-east setting of the Dedham Vale National Landscape in relation to 50 m high pylons is shown on Figure A13.5.4 within Annex B of the National Landscape Assessment Study (document reference 6.13.A5). The setting includes:

- The complementary landscape of the Brett Valley south of Upper Layham which reflects the findings of the National Grid's Bramford to Twinstead project, Appendix 6.2, Annex A, Section 3.1 of the Development Consent Order (DCO) submission (National Grid, 2023)
- The complementary landscape of the farmed plateau broadly between Raydon and Brantham, also encompassing Holton St Mary and East Bergholt
- Areas which have the greatest intervisibility with the National Landscape at distances within which pylons could be considered to have a substantial impact on its natural beauty and special qualities.

3.2.3 The southern setting of the Dedham Vale National Landscape in relation to 50 m high pylons is shown on Figure A13.5.5 within Annex B of the National Landscape Assessment Study (document reference 6.13.A5). The setting includes:

- The complementary landscapes of tributary valleys of the River Stour, including the Black Brook
- The complementary landscapes of the farmed plateau between Wormingford and Langham, including Great Horkesley, Boxted and parts of Ardleigh Heath and Dedham Heath
- Areas which have the greatest intervisibility with the National Landscape at distances within which pylons could be considered to have a substantial impact on its natural beauty and special qualities.

3.3 The Project in Relation to the Dedham Vale National Landscape

3.3.1 Section C of the Project passes through and to the north of the Dedham Vale National Landscape and Section D passes to the south of the National Landscape. The swathe of land within the Dedham Vale National Landscape affected by the Project is approximately 5.7 km long and typically 120 m wide, with the width of the swathe increasing to 200 m at trenchless crossings.

3.3.2 The Project would be installed as underground cable through the Dedham Vale National Landscape and adjacent land. This commitment is secured within the draft DCO (document reference 3.1). Wenham Grove CSE Compound would be located to the east of Raydon Great Wood, approximately 2 km to the north-east of the National Landscape at its closest point. The Project would transition from underground cable at this point, back on to overhead line heading north away from the Dedham Vale National Landscape. To the south-east of the National Landscape, the underground cable route would continue outside the National Landscape and terminate at a new substation known as the EACN Substation, approximately 1.3 km south of the National Landscape.

3.3.3 The Project would transition to overhead line between the EACN Substation and Great Horkesley (EACN Side) CSE Compound to the west. A further section of underground cables secured through the draft DCO (document reference 3.1) is proposed to the south-west of the National Landscape at Great Horkesley, where the

Project is within the setting of the Dedham Vale National Landscape. The Great Horkesley (EACN Side) and Great Horkesley (Tilbury Side) CSE compounds are located approximately 1.3 km to the south of the Dedham Vale National Landscape at each end of this underground section. The Project would transition back to overhead line at Great Horkesley (Tilbury Side) CSE Compound, and head south away from the protected landscape.

3.3.4 The Project components which were assessed in relation to the effects on the special qualities of the Dedham Vale National Landscape are the construction and operation (and maintenance) of the 400 kV underground cables and the construction and operation (and maintenance) of the 400 kV overhead line. Table A13.1.1 of the National Landscape Assessment Study (document reference 6.13.A5) details the Project components which were excluded from the assessment of effects on the National Landscape and a justification for the decision.

3.4 Suffolk and Essex Coast and Heaths National Landscape

3.4.1 Although a part of Suffolk and Essex Coast and Heaths National Landscape is located within the Study Area, it falls only just within the edge of the Study Area. No part of the Project either during construction or operation would directly affect the Suffolk and Essex Coast and Heaths National Landscape. This National Landscape is approximately 3.7 km to the south-east of the Limits of Deviation (lateral overhead line Limit of Deviation) of the closest above ground operational element of the Project, namely the overhead line and Wenham Grove CSE Compound (Section C). The closest part of the Project during operation would be the underground cable which lies just under 3 km from the Suffolk and Essex Coast and Heaths National Landscape. Due to a combination of distance and intervening vegetation, site visits have confirmed that visibility from the area of Suffolk and Essex Coast and Heaths National Landscape which falls within the Study Area is restricted and views tend to be inward looking in the immediate valley. This National Landscape has therefore not been included within the National Landscape Assessment Study (document reference 6.13.A5) as it is considered that there is no potential for significant landscape and visual effects to occur, or for any effects on its special qualities.

4. Project Design - National Landscapes

4.1 Project Design

4.1.1 The previous version of section 85 of the CRoW Act required relevant authorities to 'have regard' to the statutory purpose of the National Landscapes; the duty that relevant authorities must 'seek to further' introduced by section 245 of the LURA did not come into force until December 2023. This was after the Project had undertaken the Corridor and Preliminary Routeing and Siting Study (CPRSS) (document reference 7.18) and two non-statutory consultations, but in advance of the statutory consultation in 2024. Since the introduction of this strengthened duty, Defra has published guidance (Defra, 2024) and the application and consequences of the duty has been informed by a number of projects which have sought to evidence the duty when considering development both within protected landscapes and their setting.

4.1.2 This section details how Project design has considered protected landscapes and how the Project has sought to meet the Defra guidance (Defra, 2024) which requires relevant authorities to seek to avoid harm and consider whether measures can be embedded in the design of plans and proposals when seeking to contribute and further the purposes of the designation.

4.2 Approach to Options Appraisal

4.2.1 Options appraisal is a robust and transparent process that is used to compare options and to record the positive and negative effects they may have in meeting the defined need, across a wide range of criteria including environmental, socio-economic, technical, and cost factors. The aim is to find a balanced outcome to meeting the identified need while meeting National Grid's statutory duties. Further details on the options appraisal process can be found in Appendix 3.1: Our Approach to Options Appraisal (document reference 6.3.A1) and in Appendix 3.2: Our Approach to Consenting (document reference 6.3.A2).

4.2.2 The options appraisal involved a hierarchical assessment starting from strategic alternatives (such as broad technology choices and geographic areas) to select a preferred Strategic Proposal i.e. the Project, which is then defined in detail through further design and assessment work. This proposal was then subject to routeing and siting to determine an alignment, which was subsequently refined following statutory and non-statutory consultation. Finally, alternative construction methods were considered.

4.2.3 At each stage in the options appraisal process, transparent methods were used to inform decision-making. This included technical inputs from engineers, planners and environmental consultants to inform the decisions and design. The optioneering process drew on data and evidence collected from both desk studies and field work. Decision-making also took account of feedback from both prescribed bodies and the local community through a programme of engagement and consultation. In addition, the appraisal was subject to challenge and review to ensure the robustness of the decisions made in light of changing circumstances (including technical, environmental, socio-economic, and cost factors).

4.3 Strategic Proposal

4.3.1 The CPRSS (document reference 7.18) established the preferred Strategic Proposal following comprehensive assessment of alternative strategic options to meet the identified transmission system need. This strategic assessment evaluated multiple technological approaches including offshore connections, onshore alternatives, High Voltage Direct Current options, and various Alternating Current (AC) configurations, balancing cost, technical performance, environmental and socio-economic effects in accordance with National Grid's statutory duties under the Electricity Act 1989. The assessment determined that steel lattice pylon supported overhead lines would provide the primary technology solution, with targeted underground cable sections in environmentally sensitive areas to optimise system performance whilst meeting statutory environmental duties and policy requirements.

4.3.2 The Strategic Proposal comprises:

- Norwich Main to Bramford Connection
- New EACN Substation within Tendring District
- Bramford to Tilbury Connection

4.3.3 The CPRSS strategic assessment identified the requirement for a new EACN Substation within the broader East Anglia region to efficiently integrate offshore wind farm connections for which National Grid has contracted connection agreements that it is legally obliged to honour, comprising the Essex Coast Generation Group. The strategic evaluation considered regional alternatives including coastal locations and determined that the Tendring District location was optimal. This strategic decision was based on avoiding the need to cross the Suffolk & Essex Coast & Heaths National Landscape (which would be required for Felixstowe area alternatives), reducing infrastructure complexity, and minimising additional connection requirements.

4.3.4 Chapter 3: Main Alternatives of the ES (document reference 6.3) sets out the strategic options that were considered in the identification of the Project and the reasonable alternatives studied by National Grid. At this stage the CPRSS (document reference 7.18) recognised that underground cables could provide environmental benefits in specific locations where overhead lines would result in particularly significant landscape and visual impacts. The strategic assessment therefore identified that AC underground cable technology would be appropriate for targeted sections, particularly in areas of high environmental sensitivity such as nationally designated landscapes, their settings, and other locations where the thresholds outlined in NPS EN5 paragraph 2.9.23 are met.

4.3.5 Full details of the Strategic Proposal are set out in the CPRSS (document reference 7.18) and Chapter 3: Main Alternatives of the ES (document reference 6.3). The Strategic Proposal was taken forward for detailed corridor routeing and siting assessment.

4.4 Corridor Routeing and Siting and the National Landscape

4.4.1 Following the establishment of the Strategic Proposal, the next phase was to develop the specific Project through detailed corridor routeing and siting studies. This process translated the strategic-level parameters into specific infrastructure designs, comprising comprehensive assessments for overhead line corridors, underground cable routes, substation locations, CSE compound sites, and associated works required to deliver the transmission connection.

4.4.2 The siting and routeing methodology applied, and a summary of the corridor options appraisal carried out for the route corridors and EACN Substation siting is summarised within Chapter 3: Main Alternatives of the ES (document reference 6.3).

4.4.3 During the detailed corridor routeing and siting studies a key consideration was the protected landscape and whether the Bramford to EACN Substation connection should route through the Dedham Vale National Landscape (using underground cables within the designation) or avoid it. A summary of the options considered is contained within Chapter 3: Main Alternatives of the ES (document reference 6.3) with further detail provided within Section 5.5 of the CPRSS (document reference 7.18).

4.4.4 Routes both through and around the National Landscape were considered. Whilst laying underground cabling through the National Landscape would have an effect on the landscape, this would facilitate a more direct route. An alignment through the Dedham Vale National Landscape is approximately half the length of a route that avoids the Dedham Vale National Landscape.

4.4.5 Routes avoiding the National Landscape by passing north of Colchester also presented significant additional challenges, including greater technical complexity with multiple constrained sections, increased construction complexity, and the need for additional crossings of existing infrastructure. Two connections would need to be routed between the north side of Colchester and the southern boundary of the National Landscape. In particular, there are expected to be routeing and technical challenges in places such as the A12 crossing, Ardleigh reservoir and the railway crossing to the northeast of Ardleigh.

4.4.6 In selecting a route and specific underground technology choice through the National Landscape, the Project has applied the mitigation hierarchy through careful routeing and siting to identify a preferred option a greater distance from particularly highly valued parts of the Dedham Vale National Landscape with less potential for adverse effects on the historic environment and one which presented a lower risk of Likely Significant Effects on the internationally designated sites (Stour and Orwell Estuaries Special Protection Area and supporting Cattawade Marshes Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)) and their qualifying features compared to other options through the National Landscape. Additional factors supporting this selection included the direct route being approximately half the length of western avoidance alternatives, while western routes presented significant technical challenges including greater technical complexity with multiple constrained sections and increased construction complexity.

4.4.7 National Grid's understanding of the constraints has developed since the publication of the CPRSS (document reference 7.18), this has been considered within the review process and Design Development Reports (DDRs) (2023 DDR (document reference 7.20), 2024 DDR (document reference 7.21) and 2025 DDR (document reference 5.15)).

4.5 Regular Reviews

4.5.1 The design process incorporated regular reviews. The development of any project is always evolving as knowledge about the project and potential areas in which it is sited grows and alters. In addition, previous assumptions and/or decisions are the subject of review.

4.5.2 Strategic Options Backcheck and Review (SoBR) documents are prepared annually as part of an iterative process to validate strategic decisions against evolving circumstances. This ongoing review process ensures that the strategic options remain optimal as new information becomes available. This iterative SoBR process has consistently confirmed the strategic preference originally established in the CPRSS (document reference 7.18). The latest review is contained within the 2025 SoBR (document reference 7.17) which concluded that no material changes to environmental, socio-economic, technical or cost appraisals warranted alteration of the strategic decision-making, reaffirming that Norwich Main to Bramford combined with Bramford via new substation to Tilbury remains the optimal strategic solution.

4.5.3 In addition to this, a review process has also been included within the DDRs. The rebranding of the National Landscapes from AONBs and the seek to further duty pursuant to section 245 LURA were considered as part of the review undertaken after the 2023 non-statutory consultation in Chapter 4 of the 2024 DDR (document reference 7.21). It was concluded that the National Landscapes were considered within the CPRSS (document reference 7.18) and the introduction of the seek to further duty would not have, and does not, affect the conclusions reached.

4.5.4 The 2025 DDR (document reference 5.15) and Chapter 3: Main Alternatives of the ES (document reference 6.3) has again concluded that the introduction of the seek to further duty, would not have, and does not, change the conclusions reached in relation to the alignment of the Project in the context of the National Landscape. It has been considered whether the seek to further duty would require a different approach to corridor selection. The analysis found that:

- Routeing around the Dedham Vale National Landscape (Options BE3/BE4) would require approximately 25 km of additional overhead line infrastructure compared to the selected route
- While such routeing would reduce the length of underground cable within the National Landscape, due to restrictions at constraint locations, an estimated 3 km may be required to follow a route to the north of Langham on the Project corridor. Underground cable in the National Landscape would be estimated to reduce from approximately 5.8 km to approximately 3 km, this reduction would be achieved at the cost of potentially significantly greater environmental impacts across a wider area
- The alternative route would still require approximately 16 km of underground cable in total as the increase in effects is likely to require the second connection to be installed as underground cable from the east of Great Horkesley to the EACN Substation. This is in addition to an estimated 3 km within the National Landscape boundary due to constraint locations
- The environmental benefits of avoiding the designated landscape are outweighed by the additional environmental costs associated with the extended overhead line route.

4.5.5 National Grid concluded that the strengthened duty does not require adoption of a route around the National Landscape. The proposed alignment, using underground cable technology through the National Landscape, represents an appropriate balance between minimising effects on the designated landscape while maintaining compliance with National Grid's statutory duties under the Electricity Act 1989 to be economic and efficient. The approach of careful routeing and siting to identify an alignment away from particularly highly valued parts of the protected landscape, combined with underground technology, demonstrates how the Project seeks to further the purposes of the National Landscape while meeting the strategic network reinforcement need.

4.6 Design Changes Following Consultation

4.6.1 The findings of the CPRSS (document reference 7.18) provided the options and sites that were taken forward to begin a process of iterative design informed by consultation feedback and the findings of initial studies.

4.6.2 National Grid has progressively modified the design and provided increasing levels of detail within consultations as the design has matured. The feedback received from each of the consultations has helped shape and guide the development of the Project.

4.6.3 Following the 2022 non-statutory consultation, National Grid made significant changes to its proposals, particularly focusing on corridor realignments in and around the National Landscape and technology changes. These changes were reported in detail in the 2023 DDR (document reference 7.20) and summarised below:

- Adoption of a modified corridor to connect the underground cable route through the National Landscape to the proposed CSE compound north of the designation, to the south of Notley Enterprise Park. The CSE compound siting and corridor changes reduce potential impacts on heritage assets, residential amenity and the Dedham Vale National Landscape
- Proposal to continue the underground cables through the Dedham Vale National Landscape to the EACN Substation. This removes the need for a section of double overhead lines in and out of the EACN Substation and also allows adjustment of the remaining overhead line (EACN Substation to Tilbury) near Ardleigh to increase the separation of the overhead line from the village
- Adoption of underground cable technology in the vicinity of Great Horkesley. Underground cable was selected around Great Horkesley (between Great Horkesley (EACN Side) and Great Horkesley (Tilbury Side) CSE compounds) taking into account the potential effects on the National Landscape and its setting, in addition to relevant policy.

4.6.4 Following the 2023 non-statutory consultation a further change was proposed to the positioning of the CSE compound to the north of the Dedham Vale National Landscape. An alternative siting was adopted to the north of Wenham Grove but south of a disused railway, as the location would benefit from more screening from long distance views (some from within the National Landscape).

4.6.5 A number of locations were also identified for trenchless crossing techniques within the National Landscape:

- Higham Road – to reduce effects on an area of particular archaeological interest (including a number of Bronze age barrows)
- A12 – given the importance of the A12 for traffic movements and the additional complexities of embanked sections, open cut trench installation methods are not considered appropriate for this road crossing
- River Stour - to reduce effects given the ecological sensitivity (including SSSI, Ramsar and European designations downstream) it is proposed to utilise trenchless crossing techniques
- Woodland area within the Dedham Vale National Landscape adjacent to the Grade I Listed Church of St Mary - the use of a trenchless crossing technique was included to allow retention of the woodland. Areas of woodland are important features of the National Landscape, and the area provides screening for the Grade I Listed church in addition to ecological value.

4.6.6 Further detail on the changes to the CSE compound and crossing techniques is available in the 2024 DDR (document reference 7.21).

4.6.7 Following the 2024 statutory consultation, feedback raised concerns about the potential effects of underground cable installation on areas of mature woodland and associated protected species near the Church of St Mary at Langham which was introduced following the 2023 consultation. The results of ecology surveys confirmed the presence of protected species in this location. On balance, given the sensitivity of the National Landscape and protected species it is considered an alternative more western alignment is preferred.

4.6.8 The western alignment does not interact with the Church of St Mary at Langham or adjacent woodland and protected species. It would also reduce the loss of trees along a number of tree-lined roads (some are affected near Docura's Farm but overall loss is reduced compared with the statutory consultation) and reduces interaction with a number of diversified estate business activities. It does, in terms of agricultural land, transfer effects from diversified estate activities to land subject predominantly to standard arable cropping. Adopting the western alternative would also lead to a transfer of effects between a small number of residential properties that are close to both alternatives. Further detail is available within the 2025 DDR (document reference 5.15).

4.6.9 Whilst no changes have been proposed, National Grid has received feedback in relation to the effects of the proposed overhead line at Ardleigh, to the south of the National Landscape. The reasons why changes cannot be made in this location are set out in the 2025 DDR (document reference 5.15).

4.7 Underground Cable and Construction Techniques

Underground Cable

4.7.1 It was assessed that steel lattice pylon supported overhead lines would provide the primary technology solution, with targeted underground cable sections in technically constrained and environmentally sensitive areas to optimise system performance whilst meeting statutory environmental duties as well as policy requirements.

4.7.2 NPS EN-5 makes it clear that the government considers overhead lines should be the *'strong starting presumption for electricity networks developments in general'*, although *'this presumption is reversed when developments will cross part of a nationally designated landscape'* (paragraph 2.9.20).

4.7.3 A key early commitment related to the use of underground cables through the Dedham Vale National Landscape and parts of its setting. Underground cable has been proposed in the National Landscape due to its high landscape value in accordance with paragraphs 2.9.14-15 and 2.9.20-25 of NPS EN-5. Underground cable was considered for:

- Sections through the National Landscape where the design assumption is in favour of underground cable, and
- Areas adjacent to the National Landscape where underground cable benefits may extend beyond the designated boundary.

4.7.4 The sections of underground cable are shown in relation to the National Landscapes on Figure 13.1: LVIA Study Area and Landscape Designations (document reference 6.13.F1) within Chapter 13: Landscape and Visual of the ES. With the proposed underground cable, the effects on views and setting would be reduced.

4.7.5 Underground cable has been utilised within the National Landscape and its setting to both the north and south of the designation. The underground cable runs from the area around Raydon to the north of Dedham Vale National Landscape, to the EACN Substation to the south of the protected landscape. A section of underground cable has also been considered appropriate at Great Horkesley due to the proximity of the Project to the National Landscape and the potential effects of an overhead line in close proximity to the Dedham Vale National Landscape. This results in the majority of cable within the setting of the National Landscape to the south being underground.

4.7.6 The Great Horkesley CSE compounds (EACN Side and Tilbury Side) and immediately adjacent pylons are just within the setting of the National Landscape, which is identified as a gradual swathe on Figure A13.5.5 Landscape and Visual – Setting of Dedham Vale National Landscape in relation to the Project (south) (found in Annex B of Appendix 13.5 National Landscape Assessment Study (document reference 6.13.A5) of Chapter 13: Landscape and Visual of the ES).

4.7.7 The Great Horkesley (EACN Side and Tilbury Side) CSE compounds are both approximately 1.3 km from the Dedham Vale National Landscape boundary. The Great Horkesley CSE compounds were excluded from the assessment of effects on the Dedham Vale National Landscape as it was considered they would have negligible and not significant effects on the National Landscape. A more detailed justification for this decision is set out in Table A13.1.1 Proposed components excluded from assessment of effects on the National Landscape, within the Appendix 13.5: National Landscape Assessment Study (document reference 6.13.A5) to Chapter 13: Landscape and Visual of the ES.

4.7.8 In terms of the overhead line between the EACN Substation and Great Horkesley (EACN Side) CSE Compound and the overhead line south of Great Horkesley (Tilbury Side) CSE Compound, at over 1.3 km the proposed overhead line is not anticipated to be a noticeable feature in many views from the National Landscape, particularly when field boundary and other intervening vegetation is taken into account. During both construction and operation (and maintenance) given the distance between the National Landscape and overhead line component, effects on the special qualities of the National Landscape would be minor and not significant

(adverse). Further detail is provided within the Appendix 13.5: National Landscape Assessment Study (document reference 6.13.A5) to Chapter 13: Landscape and Visual of the ES.

4.7.9 Based on the outputs from the assessment, the need for a greater extent of underground cable and the relocation of the Great Horkesley (EACN Side and Tilbury Side) CSE compounds to a location outside the setting of the Dedham Vale National Landscape is not considered justified in terms of any legislative or policy requirement.

Construction Technique

4.7.10 National Grid has considered the choice of construction method for installing the underground cables during design development as part of the options appraisal process following consultations, and this has been refined since based on the results of environmental surveys, technical assessments (including ground investigations) and feedback during consultations.

4.7.11 Underground cable installation methods have been selected based on site-specific constraints and technical requirements. Trenchless methods are utilised where open-cut installation is not technically feasible or environmentally acceptable, whilst open-cut methods are employed where constraints do not necessitate alternative techniques.

4.7.12 Open-cut trenches are quicker and more economical to install than trenchless methods, allowing land to be reinstated quicker. However, National Grid has continued to consider the use of trenchless crossing techniques, which although more expensive and time consuming to undertake, can avoid impacts on specific features such as rivers, railways and habitats. However, trenchless techniques have the potential to introduce different environmental effects including noise, groundwater effects and an increased risk of break out of drilling mud during construction. Therefore, the use of trenchless techniques has been carefully considered alongside environmental and technical surveys (particularly ground conditions) to identify if it is a suitable method at a given location. Table 3.18 Underground cable installation techniques, of Chapter 3: Alternatives of the ES (document reference 6.3) compares the environmental effects of the two underground cable installation techniques.

4.7.13 The options appraisal process set out in the CPRSS (document reference 7.18) and summarised in Chapter 3: Alternatives of the ES (document reference 6.3) determined that open-cut trenching would be used in the majority of locations where underground cables are required. However, trenchless crossings are included within the design; some of these locations are within the National Landscape and relate to the crossing of Higham Road, the A12 and the River Stour. To avoid impacts on the river, the marginal habitats and people using the River Stour for water-based recreation, trenchless techniques will be used. Further detail is provided on the use of trenchless techniques at the crossing of the River Stour within the 2025 DDR (document reference 5.15).

4.8 Siting of Infrastructure

4.8.1 The Project aligns with NPS EN-5 in how it has approached siting of infrastructure with regard to the National Landscape.

4.8.2 None of the study areas identified for the substations and CSE compounds are located within designated landscapes. The selection of CSE compound locations was informed by the desire to avoid significant direct and indirect impacts on designated landscapes. As described above and in the 2025 DDR (document reference 5.15) and the Design Approach for Site-Specific Infrastructure (DASSI) (document reference 7.16), National Grid has reviewed and revised the locations of CSE compounds, for example at Notley Enterprise Park, to reduce potential impacts on heritage assets, residential amenity and the Dedham Vale National Landscape. Outline landscape mitigation proposals have been developed for the areas around the CSE compounds to complement the existing landscape structure.

4.8.3 National Grid has avoided locating the CSE compounds and the EACN Substation inside the Dedham Vale National Landscape and further minimised effects through sensitive siting of these aspects of development to avoid significant effects within its setting. The electricity connection in the National Landscape is an underground cable, meeting the requirements of NPS EN-5 (DESNZ, 2024b) by applying the presumption that connections within a National Landscape should be located underground.

4.9 Mitigation Hierarchy

4.9.1 In line with the approach set out in Chapter 5: EIA Approach and Method of the ES (document reference 6.5) and the Planning Statement (document reference 5.6) the mitigation hierarchy has been applied during the iterative design process to reduce the adverse effects of the Project on the Protected Landscapes which has been evidenced within this Section. Section 5 also details how further mitigation measures have been embedded or adopted to reduce the adverse effects.

5. Assessment of Effects of the Project on the Dedham Vale National Landscape

5.1 National Landscape Assessment Study

5.1.1 The Project has been sited and designed to reduce the potential for adverse effects on the designation and alteration of its defined special qualities, as far as practicable.

5.1.2 Appendix 13.5: National Landscape Assessment Study (document reference 6.13.A5) of Chapter 13: Landscape and Visual of the ES describes the effects of the Project on the Dedham Vale National Landscape during construction and operation (and maintenance).

5.1.3 The construction and operation (and maintenance) of the CSE compounds and the EACN Substation that fall within 3 km of the Dedham Vale National Landscape would either have negligible effects or not affect the National Landscape and therefore were excluded from the assessment. Further detail in relation to the reasoning for this can be found in Table A13.1.1: Project Components Excluded from Assessment of Effects on the National Landscape in Appendix 13.5: National Landscape Assessment Study (document reference 6.13.A5) of Chapter 13: Landscape and Visual of the ES.

5.1.4 Although the Project cable would be underground within Dedham Vale National Landscape, a commitment which is secured within the draft DCO (document reference 3.1), construction would have direct impacts. The installation of underground cables would involve disturbance to vegetation, soils and watercourses within a swathe of land in the National Landscape that is approximately 5.7 km long and typically 120 m wide and approximately 200 m wide at trenchless crossing locations. The construction phase would also introduce temporary haul roads, soil storage, drainage, construction activity, vehicles and machinery and lighting in the hours of darkness.

5.1.5 The assessment of effects on the special qualities of Dedham Vale National Landscape has established that the following special qualities would be subject to major and significant (adverse) effects during construction:

- Iconic lowland river valley associated with the artist John Constable RA, the views he painted are still recognisable today
- A sense of relative tranquillity.

5.1.6 Three of the special qualities would be subject to moderate and significant (adverse) effects during construction

- Valley bottom grazing marshes with associated drainage ditches and wildlife
- Naturally functioning River Stour with associated tributaries, meres, and historic river management features
- Surprisingly long-distance views from higher ground along the valley in an area associated with large skies.

5.1.7 Four special qualities would be subject to minor and not significant (adverse) effects during construction:

- Historic villages with timber framed housing and prominent churches
- Semi natural ancient woodlands on valley sides with associated wildlife
- Traditional field boundaries intact and well managed
- Apparent and buried archaeology indicating millennia of human activity.

5.1.8 The effects on the special qualities would reduce to minor and not significant (adverse) during operation (and maintenance) once the underground cables are covered over and land use and landcover reinstated as far as practicable.

5.1.9 In summary, the Project will result in significant adverse effects on the special qualities of the Dedham Vale National Landscape during construction. However, during operation (and maintenance) the adverse effects on the special qualities of the National Landscape are judged to be minor and not significant (adverse).

5.1.10 Detailed assessments of the nature of the effects during construction and operation (and maintenance) are provided within Table A13.1.3: Assessment of Effects on the Special Qualities of Dedham Vale National Landscape, in Appendix 13.5: National Landscape Assessment Study (document reference 6.13.A5) of Chapter 13: Landscape and Visual of the ES.

5.2 Flexibility Within the Order Limits

5.2.1 There is one location within the Dedham Vale National Landscape and one within its setting where alternative designs were identified within Chapter 4: Project Description of the ES (document reference 6.4). The effects of these design scenarios on landscape and visual receptors, in comparison with the effects of the Project as it is currently envisaged are set out in Section 13.9: Sensitivity Testing in Chapter 13: Landscape and Visual (document reference 6.13) and summarised below.

River Stour Crossing West of Stratford St Mary

5.2.2 The alternative design scenario provides for a single underground crossing at either the northern or southern crossings of the River Stour, within Dedham Vale National Landscape. The use of both crossings (northern and southern) has been assessed as part of the Project within the ES.

5.2.3 The northern crossing and southern part of the southern crossing are in the Stour River Valley Floor Landscape Character Area (LCA). The northern part of the southern crossing is within the Valley Meadowlands Landscape Character Type. A single crossing would reduce the temporary loss of vegetation including grazing marsh along the River Stour and field boundary hedgerows, both of which contribute to the identified special qualities of the National Landscape. There would be a slight decrease in significant effects on landscape features and key characteristics within a localised area along the valley floor.

5.2.4 A single crossing would reduce significant effects on visual receptors during the construction period within a localised area of the National Landscape. This would include local residents and recreational receptors, including users of the St Edmund Way and Stour Valley Path long distance walking routes. Effects on visual receptors

within Visual Receptor Areas (VRAs) C8 and C9 would be reduced within a localised area but would remain significant for some visual receptors during construction.

Black Brook North of Langham

5.2.5 The design scenario allows for flexibility of routeing the underground cable within widened Order Limits to the west of the A12 and south of Black Brook, in the vicinity of existing UK Power Networks underground cables. The widened Order Limits are within an area which forms part of the setting of Dedham Vale National Landscape. The crossing of Black Brook in all scenarios would be a trenched crossing as a trenchless technique is not possible in this location due to the proximity of residential and commercial properties and the unconstrained swathe width requirements for a trenchless crossing.

5.2.6 The assessed alignment and the design scenario are both located in the Langham Farmland Plateau LCA. Both options cross farmland and field boundary vegetation. Both options would result in similar effects on landscape features and key characteristics, and therefore there would be no change to the significance of effects on landscape character.

5.2.7 The design scenario would bring construction activity slightly closer to properties along Grove Hill to the west. For both options there would be close views towards the construction of the underground cable for local community receptors including residents along Grove Hill. Effects would be temporary and short term. Overall, there would be no change to the significance of effects on visual receptors in VRAs C10 and C11.

5.3 Embedded and Standard Mitigation - Landscape and Visual

5.3.1 The approach to mitigation including a description of the mitigation hierarchy is set out in Chapter 5: EIA Approach and Method of the ES (document reference 6.5) and also the Planning Statement (document reference 5.6).

5.3.2 Environmental appraisal was an integral part of the Project design from the outset, which has meant that the Project was able to avoid environmentally sensitive features as far as reasonably practicable. National Grid has also embedded measures into the design of the Project to avoid, prevent or reduce significant effects that may otherwise be experienced during construction and operation (and maintenance) of the Project in line with the mitigation hierarchy.

Embedded Mitigation - Landscape and Visual

5.3.3 Some of these embedded measures which relate to the National Landscape have been summarised in Section 4 of this document. The embedded mitigation is presented in Table 4.2 of Chapter 4: Project Description of the ES (document reference 6.4). Those relevant to Landscape and Visual amenity include:

- Sensitive routeing and siting of the alignment and Order Limits - as far as practicable, effects on identified environmental (including landscape and visual, ecology and heritage assets) and socio-economics receptors have been avoided and reduced

- Undergrounding is proposed in four locations, including through the Dedham Vale National Landscape and part of its setting. With the proposed underground cable, the effects on views and setting would be reduced
- The Project allows for landscape planting around CSE compounds, the new EACN Substation, south of the new Tilbury North Substation and the existing Norwich Main Substation and its extension. These are shown as 'Environmental Areas' on Figure 4.1: Proposed Project Design (document reference 6.4.F1) and Figure 4.2: Proposed Project Design – Permanent Features (document reference 6.4.F2). Further details including landscape plans and planting schedules are provided in the Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP) (document reference 7.4)
- Replacement planting would be undertaken at the earliest opportunity given the right planting season to mitigate, where practicable, vegetation removed during construction
- National Grid has considered the proposed materials and colour palette for the CSE compounds and new substations/substation extension buildings to be sensitive to the environment they are located in, where practicable. Further information is included in the DASSI (document reference 7.16).

Standard Mitigation - Landscape and Visual

5.3.4 Standard mitigation measures, comprising management activities and techniques, would be implemented during construction of the Project to limit effects through adherence to good site practices and achieving legal compliance. The Outline Code of Construction Practice (CoCP) (document reference 7.2) contains relevant good practice measures relating to Landscape and Visual. The measures have been assigned references, for example, GG01, to align with the references provided in Table 6.1 of the Outline CoCP (document reference 7.2) for ease of cross-reference. Measures include but are not limited to:

- GG08: Where features are to be retained (including veteran trees, ancient woodland, high, medium and low value trees, hedgerows, watercourses and archaeological/heritage assets where practicable), an appropriate protective area or protection mechanisms will be established using appropriate equipment or fencing and signage and will be inspected, repaired, and replaced as necessary
- LV01: An Environmental Manager(s)/Environmental Clerk of Works will be appointed for the duration of the construction phase
- LV02: Pre-construction condition surveys will be undertaken during the construction period to ensure appropriate reinstatement is undertaken. These will identify and record the condition of features such as trees, woodland, hedgerows, walls and fences that are to be reinstated
- LV03: Construction lighting will be directional and minimised where possible
- LV04: Where possible, retain elements within the landscape such as trees, hedgerows, walls and fences. Where elements cannot be retained, replacement will be used as appropriate (including re-instating fences and walls, and replanting trees and hedgerows where practicable)
- LV05: The Main Works Contractor(s) will apply the relevant protective principles set out in BS 5837:2012: Trees in relation to design, demolition, and construction

(British Standards Institution, 2012). This will be applied to trees within the Order Limits and immediate surrounds which will be preserved through the construction phase and detailed within an Arboricultural Method Statement (AMS). All works to high grade trees, including trees under Tree Preservation Orders and veteran trees, will be undertaken by a suitably qualified and experienced arborist, and supervised by an Arboricultural Clerk of Works.

- The Outline CoCP (document reference 7.2) will be secured by a requirement in the draft DCO which will require the Main Works Contractor(s) to prepare the final CoCP 'substantially in accordance with' the Outline CoCP to discharge the requirement.

5.3.5 The design development has sought to reduce impacts on the National Landscape as far as practicable.

5.4 Embedded and Standard Mitigation - Dedham Vale National Landscape

5.4.1 Table 5.1 provides details of the embedded and standard mitigation measures relevant to the Dedham Vale National Landscape which have been incorporated into the Project to minimise the effects on the special qualities and natural beauty of the Dedham Vale National Landscape.

Table 5.1 Embedded and standard mitigation measures used to minimise effects of the Project on the Dedham Vale National Landscape

Special Quality	Relevant Natural Beauty Indicators	Description	Assessment of Effects	Mitigation
Iconic lowland river valley associated with the artist John Constable RA, the views he painted are still recognisable today	Landscape quality Scenic quality Cultural heritage	The Statement of Significance in the Dedham Vale Management Plan (DVNL Partnership, 2021) identifies the National Landscape as a '*predominately agricultural landscape that exhibits a subtle lowland river valley with an assemblage of features associated with this landscape still in place and intact.*' In relation to this lowland river valley, the Alison Farmer study (2016) notes that '*Gentle valley slopes and steeper tributary valleys with woodland give rise to a subtle but legible landscape*'.	Construction - during construction there would be a **major and significant (adverse) effect** on some of the '*in place and intact*' '*assemblage of features*' which combine to create the '*iconic lowland river valley*'. The effect would be localised albeit along the length of the underground cable corridor and short to medium term.	Commitment to underground cables within the National Landscape and the adjacent land Careful consideration of the routeing of the underground cables to avoid the most highly sensitive features as far as practicable e.g. underground route was changed following statutory consultation to avoid impacts on woodland/parkland at Langham Commitment to cross the River Stour and woodland south of Higham Road using trenchless techniques to retain larger areas of woodland and trees which line the River Stour Order Limits for the underground cable construction have been restricted in places within the National Landscape to minimise vegetation loss Embedded mitigation measures outlined in Table

Special Quality	Relevant Natural Beauty Indicators	Description	Assessment of Effects	Mitigation
				4.2 of Chapter 4: Project Description of the ES (document reference 6.4) Mitigation measures outlined in Table 6.1 of the CoCP (document reference 7.2); Main Works Contractor must prepare the final CoCP substantially in accordance with the Outline CoCP Measures relating to protection of vegetation to be retained and reinstatement of lost vegetation as detailed in the Outline LEMP (document reference 7.4)
			Operation - given proposed underground cables within the National Landscape and its immediate setting, and the reinstatement of vegetation in the longer term, there would be a **minor and not significant (adverse) effect on this special quality during operation (and maintenance)**.	Commitment to underground cables within the National Landscape and the adjacent land Reinstatement of vegetation and trees including field boundary hedgerows, where practicable as detailed in the Outline LEMP (document reference 7.4) Embedded mitigation measures outlined in Table 4.2 of Chapter 4: Project Description of the ES (document reference 6.4)

Special Quality	Relevant Natural Beauty Indicators	Description	Assessment of Effects	Mitigation
		The Statement of Significance notes that '*The fundamental beauty of the area and the scenes of a working landscape were captured by England's finest landscape artist, John Constable. The sites of his paintings are still recognisable in the heart of what is now the AONB.*' In relation to Constable and other artists, the Alison Farmer study notes that '*The AONB contains an assemblage of features captured in the paintings of John Constable, Sir Alfred Munnings and John Nash which are still evident today. The similarity of the landscape today to that depicted in historic paintings reinforces the timeless quality of this landscape.*'	Construction - during construction there would be a **major and significant (adverse) effect** on some of the '*assemblage of features*' which reinforce the '*timeless quality of this landscape*' during construction. The effect would be as a result of the construction of underground cables and be localised and short to medium term. Given the distance between the National Landscape and construction of the overhead line component, effects relating to longer views would be **minor and not significant (adverse) during construction**.	Commitment to underground cables within the National Landscape and the adjacent land Careful consideration of the routeing of the underground cables to avoid the most highly sensitive features as far as practicable e.g. underground route was changed following statutory consultation to avoid impacts on woodland/parkland at Langham Commitment to cross the River Stour and woodland south of Higham Road using trenchless techniques to retain larger areas of woodland and trees which line the River Stour Order Limits for the underground cable construction within the National Landscape have been restricted in places to minimise vegetation loss Careful siting of the CSE compounds and transition to overhead line – 2 km from the northern boundary and

Special Quality	Relevant Natural Beauty Indicators	Description	Assessment of Effects	Mitigation
				1.3 km from the southern boundary of the Dedham Vale National Landscape Embedded mitigation measures outlined in Table 4.2 of Chapter 4: Project Description of the ES (document reference 6.4) Mitigation measures outlined in Table 6.1 of the Outline CoCP (document reference 7.2); Main Works Contractor must prepare the final CoCP substantially in accordance with the Outline CoCP Measures relating to protection of vegetation to be retained and reinstatement of lost vegetation as detailed in the Outline LEMP (document reference 7.4)
			Operation - given proposed underground cables within the National Landscape and its immediate setting, and the distance between the National Landscape and overhead line component, the effect on this special quality would be **minor**	Commitment to underground cables within the National Landscape and the adjacent land Reinstatement of vegetation and trees including field boundary hedgerows, where practicable as detailed in the Outline LEMP (document reference 7.4)

Special Quality	Relevant Natural Beauty Indicators	Description	Assessment of Effects	Mitigation
			and not significant (adverse) during operation (and maintenance).	Careful siting of the CSE compounds and transition to overhead line – 2 km from the northern boundary and 1.3 km from the southern boundary of the Dedham Vale National Landscape Embedded mitigation measures outlined in Table 4.2 of Chapter 4: Project Description of the ES (document reference 6.4)
Historic villages with timber framed housing and prominent churches	Landscape quality Scenic quality Cultural heritage	The Statement of Significance notes that the National Landscape contains an assemblage of features including '*picturesque villages with imposing churches and historic timber framed buildings*'. The Alison Farmer study notes that these villages have a '*distinctive settlement form clustered around small triangular greens or 'tyes'. The small scale of traditional villages, built form and layout and the relationship between the village and the wider landscape setting remains predominately intact*.'	Construction - there would be **minor and not significant (adverse)** effects on this special quality during construction.	Sensitive siting and routeing to avoid and reduce as far as practicable effects on identified heritage assets Careful consideration of the routeing of the underground cables to avoid effects on identified heritage assets as far as practicable e.g. underground route was changed following statutory consultation to avoid impacts on woodland/parkland at Langham Commitment to underground cables within the National Landscape and the adjacent land which reduces the

Special Quality	Relevant Natural Beauty Indicators	Description	Assessment of Effects	Mitigation
				effects on the setting of heritage assets Embedded mitigation measures outlined in Table 4.2 of Chapter 4: Project Description of the ES (document reference 6.4) Mitigation measures outlined in Table 6.1 of the Outline CoCP (document reference 7.2); Main Works Contractor must prepare the final CoCP substantially in accordance with the Outline CoCP
			Operation - there would be **negligible and not significant (adverse) effects** on this special quality during operation (and maintenance).	Commitment to underground cables within the National Landscape and the adjacent land which reduces the effects on the setting of heritage assets Reinstatement of vegetation and trees including field boundary hedgerows, where practicable as detailed in the Outline LEMP (document reference 7.4) Embedded mitigation measures outlined in Table 4.2 of Chapter 4: Project Description of the ES (document reference 6.4)

Special Quality	Relevant Natural Beauty Indicators	Description	Assessment of Effects	Mitigation
Valley bottom grazing marshes with associated drainage ditches and wildlife	Landscape quality Scenic quality	The Statement of Significance notes that the National Landscape contains an assemblage of features including '*riverside grazing meadows with associated drainage ditches*'. The Alison Farmer study notes that these meadows comprise '*Green and luxuriant pastures, with grazing cows and sheep, river meandering lazily amid stout but graceful willows*.'	Construction - during construction there would be a **moderate and significant (adverse) effect** on the '*valley bottom grazing marshes*' due to the loss of sections of drainage ditches and vegetation in the short to medium term.	Use of trenchless crossing techniques to cross the River Stour which would protect some areas of grazing marsh Groundwater dependent habitats would be protected through measures within the Outline CoCP commitments W01 to W16 and Main Works Contractor must prepare the final CoCP substantially in accordance with the Outline CoCP (document reference 7.2) No veteran trees or ancient woodland affected Order Limits for the underground cable construction within the National Landscape have been restricted in places to minimise vegetation loss Embedded mitigation measures outlined in Table 4.2 of Chapter 4: Project Description of the ES (document reference 6.4) Mitigation measures outlined in Table 6.1 of the Outline CoCP (document reference 7.2); Main Works Contractor

Special Quality	Relevant Natural Beauty Indicators	Description	Assessment of Effects	Mitigation
				must prepare the final CoCP substantially in accordance with the Outline CoCP
			Operation - given the reinstatement of drainage ditches and vegetation in the longer term, the effect on this special quality would be **minor and not significant (adverse) during operation (and maintenance.**	Reinstatement of drainage ditches and vegetation and trees including field boundary hedgerows, where practicable No veteran trees or ancient woodland affected Mitigation provided through BNG Embedded mitigation measures outlined in Table 4.2 of Chapter 4: Project Description of the ES (document reference 6.4)
Naturally functioning River Stour with associated tributaries, meres, and historic river management features	Landscape quality Scenic quality Natural heritage features	The Statement of Significance notes that the National Landscape contains an assemblage of features including a '*gently winding river and tributaries*'. The Alison Farmer study notes that there is a '*concentration of valued habitats*' along the River Stour including '*Sites of Special Scientific Interest and County Wildlife Sites*', '*Alder and black poplar and pollarded willow*', '*rough grassland*' and '*Iconic*	Construction - given the protection of riverside trees along the River Stour, balanced with direct impacts on drainage ditches and the loss of deciduous woodland along a tributary of the River Stour (outside of the National Landscape but within its setting), the effect on this special quality would be	The River Stour would be crossed using trenchless crossing techniques which would avoid direct effects on the trees which line the watercourse Order Limits for the underground cable construction have been restricted in places within the National Landscape to minimise vegetation loss

Special Quality	Relevant Natural Beauty Indicators	Description	Assessment of Effects	Mitigation
		scenes along the river e.g. Flatford Mill derived from traditional management which over time has created valued habitats.' Flatford Mill and SSSIs associated with the Stour are located further east and are not within the Landscape and Visual Study Area. There is a County Wildlife Site at Wasses Marshes, within the Study Area but upstream of the Project.	**moderate and significant (adverse)** during construction.	Groundwater dependent habitats would be protected through measures within the Outline CoCP commitments W01 to W16 and Main Works Contractor must prepare the final CoCP substantially in accordance with the Outline CoCP Embedded mitigation measures outlined in Table 4.2 of Chapter 4: Project Description of the ES (document reference 6.4) Mitigation measures outlined in Table 6.1 of the Outline CoCP (document reference 7.2); Main Works Contractor must prepare the final CoCP substantially in accordance with the Outline CoCP Measures relating to protection of vegetation to be retained and reinstatement of lost vegetation as detailed in the Outline LEMP (document reference 7.4)
			Operation - given the protection of riverside trees along the River Stour, balanced with the	Reinstatement of vegetation and trees including field boundary hedgerows, where practicable as detailed in the

Special Quality	Relevant Natural Beauty Indicators	Description	Assessment of Effects	Mitigation
			loss of deciduous woodland along a tributary of the River Stour (outside of the National Landscape but within its setting), the effect on this special quality would be **minor and not significant (adverse)** during operation (and maintenance)	Outline LEMP (document reference 7.4) Mitigation provided through BNG Embedded mitigation measures outlined in Table 4.2 of Chapter 4: Project Description of the ES (document reference 6.4)
Semi natural ancient woodlands on valley sides with associated wildlife	Landscape quality Scenic quality Natural heritage features	The Statement of Significance notes that the National Landscape contains an assemblage of features including '*gentle valley sides with scattered woodlands*'. The Alison Farmer study notes there are '*Appealing woodland patterns and woodland habitat networks*' as well as '*Ancient woodland on the valley sides e.g. Boxted Hall and alder carr along the valley floor*'.	Construction - the effect on this special quality would be **minor and not significant (adverse**) during construction	Careful consideration of the routeing of the underground cables to avoid the most highly sensitive features as far as practicable e.g. underground route was changed following statutory consultation to avoid impacts on woodland/parkland at Langham Woodland south of Higham Road and trees along the River Stour would be retained by using trenchless crossing techniques Order Limits for the underground cable construction within the National Landscape have

Special Quality	Relevant Natural Beauty Indicators	Description	Assessment of Effects	Mitigation
				been restricted in places to minimise vegetation loss Embedded mitigation measures outlined in Table 4.2 of Chapter 4: Project Description of the ES (document reference 6.4) Mitigation measures outlined in Table 6.1 of the Outline CoCP (document reference 7.2); Main Works Contractor must prepare the final CoCP substantially in accordance with the Outline CoCP Measures relating to protection of vegetation to be retained and reinstatement of lost vegetation as detailed in the Outline LEMP (document reference 7.4)
			Operation - given the protection of broadleaved woodland within the National Landscape, balanced with the loss of broadleaved woodland along the Black Brook, the effect on this special quality would be **minor and not significant (adverse) during**	Reinstatement of vegetation and trees including field boundary hedgerows, where practicable as detailed in the Outline LEMP (document reference 7.4) Embedded mitigation measures outlined in Table 4.2 of Chapter 4: Project Description of the ES (document reference 6.4)

Special Quality	Relevant Natural Beauty Indicators	Description	Assessment of Effects	Mitigation
			operation (and maintenance).	
Traditional field boundaries intact and well managed	Landscape quality Scenic quality	The Statement of Significance notes that the National Landscape contains an assemblage of features including '*small fields enclosed by ancient hedgerows*'. The Alison Farmer study notes that '*The high concentration/frequency of these features* [including hedgerows and hedgerow oaks] *and their distribution is grounded in the traditional management of the valley and is remarkably intact but highly vulnerable to loss.*'	Construction - given the relatively short sections of hedgerow which would be removed within the National Landscape, the effect on this special quality would be **minor and not significant (adverse) during construction**	The loss of traditional field boundaries through the National Landscape has been kept to a minimum through routeing and narrowing of the cable swathe, where practicable Commitment to cross the River Stour and woodland south of Higham Road using trenchless techniques to retain larger areas of woodland and trees which line the River Stour Embedded mitigation measures outlined in Table 4.2 of Chapter 4: Project Description of the ES (document reference 6.4) Mitigation measures outlined in Table 6.1 of the Outline CoCP (document reference 7.2); Main Works Contractor must prepare the final CoCP substantially in accordance with the Outline CoCP

Special Quality	Relevant Natural Beauty Indicators	Description	Assessment of Effects	Mitigation
			Operation - given the relatively short sections of hedgerow which would be removed within the National Landscape and their replacement in the longer term, the effect on this special quality would be at most **minor and not significant (adverse) during operation (and maintenance)**.	Reinstatement of vegetation and trees including field boundary hedgerows, where practicable as detailed in the Outline LEMP (document reference 7.4) Embedded mitigation measures outlined in Table 4.2 of Chapter 4: Project Description of the ES (document reference 6.4)
Apparent and buried archaeology indicating millennia of human activity	Landscape quality Scenic quality Cultural heritage	The Statement of Significance notes that the National Landscape contains an assemblage of features including '*visible and hidden archaeology providing evidence of human habitation over previous millennia*'. The Alison Farmer study notes that there is a '*Significant collection of visibly tangible historic features, structures and buildings'* and that '*Tangible historic sites including above ground and below ground archaeology e.g. cropmarks...*'	Construction - the effect on this special quality would be adverse but the residual effect following archaeological mitigation would be **minor and not be significant (adverse) during construction**.	Archaeological remains protected through measures within the Outline CoCP commitments H01 to H03 and Main Works Contractor must prepare the final CoCP substantially in accordance with the Outline CoCP Archaeological mitigation secured by requirement and commitments in the Outline Archaeological Mitigation Strategy and Outline Written Scheme of Investigation (AMS-OWSI) (document reference 7.5) Embedded mitigation measures outlined in Table 4.2 of Chapter 4: Project

Special Quality	Relevant Natural Beauty Indicators	Description	Assessment of Effects	Mitigation
				Description of the ES (document reference 6.4) Mitigation measures outlined in Table 6.1 of the Outline CoCP (document reference 7.2); Main Works Contractor must prepare the final CoCP substantially in accordance with the Outline CoCP
			Operation - the underground cable proposed in this area has resulted in assessment concluding the effects on this special quality would be **neutral and not significant during operation.**	Archaeological remains protected through measures within the Outline CoCP commitments H01 to H03 and Main Works Contractor must prepare the final CoCP substantially in accordance with the Outline CoCP (document reference 7.2) Archaeological mitigation secured by requirement and commitments in the AMS-OWSI (document reference 7.5) Embedded mitigation measures outlined in Table 4.2 of Chapter 4: Project Description of the ES (document reference 6.4)
A sense of relative tranquillity	Relative tranquillity	The Statement of Significance notes that '*The area remains*	Construction - overall, the effect on this special	Embedded mitigation measures outlined in Table

Special Quality	Relevant Natural Beauty Indicators	Description	Assessment of Effects	Mitigation
		mostly free of incongruous development and large-scale industrial developments' and '*retains a rural charm and tranquillity and is largely free of infrastructure associated with modern life*'. The Alison Farmer study notes that factors which contribute to relative tranquillity include: '*Familiar idyllic images* *Lack of overt signs of development* *Natural sounds* *Presence of water along the banks of the Stour* *Minimal noise and light intrusion* *Ability to enjoy/walk lanes with minimal traffic*'. Detractors from perceptions of tranquillity are noted to include '*Visibility and noise intrusion from A12*' which is located within the Landscape and Visual Study Area. '*Overhead lines*' are also noted as a detractor, although these cross the National Landscape in the north-west between Leavenheath and Polstead they are not within the Study Area. Smaller voltage overhead lines on lattice towers cross the National Landscape in a	quality would be **major and significant (adverse) during construction**.	4.2 of Chapter 4: Project Description of the ES (document reference 6.4) Mitigation measures outlined in Table 6.1 of the Outline CoCP (document reference 7.2); Main Works Contractor must prepare the final CoCP substantially in accordance with the Outline CoCP. Including appended outline management plans e.g. outline Noise and Vibration Management Plan and outline Dust Management Plan Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) (document reference 7.3) provides details of measures to be adopted in the Final CTMP to manage construction traffic to minimise effects

Special Quality	Relevant Natural Beauty Indicators	Description	Assessment of Effects	Mitigation
		north to south direction broadly between East Bergholt and Lawford.		
			Operation - overall, the effect on this special quality would be **minor and not significant (adverse) during operation (and maintenance)**.	Commitment to underground cables within the National Landscape and the adjacent land Careful siting of the CSE compounds and transition to overhead line – 2 km from the northern boundary and 1.3 km from the southern boundary of the Dedham Vale National Landscape The Outline CoCP (document reference 7.2) identifies specific measures to reduce operational noise and vibration through commitments NV21, NV22 and GG14 and Main Works Contractor must prepare the final CoCP substantially in accordance with the Outline CoCP Embedded mitigation measures outlined in Table 4.2 of Chapter 4: Project Description of the ES (document reference 6.4)

Special Quality	Relevant Natural Beauty Indicators	Description	Assessment of Effects	Mitigation
Surprisingly long-distance views from higher ground along the valley in an area associated with large skies	Scenic quality	The Alison Farmer study notes that within the National Landscape '*woodlands and trees and overlapping lines of vegetation enclose lanes, enhance landform and frame views such that there is an unfolding sequence of views*.' The study notes that there is a '*Wooded skyline including woodland on the surrounding plateau which defines the vale*.'	Construction - during construction there would be a **moderate and significant (adverse) effect** on this special quality because of the underground cable component of the Project. Given the distance between the National Landscape and construction of the overhead line component, and existing vegetation which would filter and screen views, effects relating to longer views would be **minor and not significant (adverse) during construction**.	Commitment to underground cables within the National Landscape and the adjacent land Careful consideration of the routeing of the underground cables to avoid the most highly sensitive features as far as practicable e.g. underground route was changed following statutory consultation to avoid impacts on woodland/parkland at Langham Commitment to cross the River Stour and woodland south of Higham Road using trenchless techniques to retain larger areas of woodland and trees which line the River Stour Careful siting of the CSE compounds and transition to overhead line – 2 km from the northern boundary and 1.3 km from the southern boundary of the Dedham Vale National Landscape Embedded mitigation measures outlined in Table 4.2 of Chapter 4: Project

Special Quality	Relevant Natural Beauty Indicators	Description	Assessment of Effects	Mitigation
				Description of the ES (document reference 6.4) Mitigation measures outlined in Table 6.1 of the Outline CoCP (document reference 7.2); Main Works Contractor must prepare the final CoCP substantially in accordance with the Outline CoCP
			Operation - given the distance between the National Landscape and the Project, and existing vegetation which would filter and screen views, the effect on this special quality would be **minor and not significant (adverse) during operation (and maintenance)**	Commitment to underground cables within the National Landscape and the adjacent land Careful siting of the CSE compounds and transition to overhead line – 2 km from the northern boundary and 1.3 km from the southern boundary of the Dedham Vale National Landscape Embedded mitigation measures outlined in Table 4.2 of Chapter 4: Project Description of the ES (document reference 6.4)

5.5 Summary

5.5.1 This section of the document has identified the mitigation measures proposed to reduce the adverse effects of the Project on the Dedham Vale National Landscape and its setting, in accordance with the mitigation hierarchy. Specific measures have been embedded into the design of the Project in addition to standard mitigation measures comprising management activities and techniques to limit effects through adherence to good site practices.

5.5.2 National Grid is satisfied the mitigation hierarchy has been applied in accordance with national policy. Further details of the mitigation hierarchy and how this has been applied by the Project is provided within the Planning Statement (document reference 5.6). Whilst some residual effects remain, National Grid is committed to provide additional measures to seek to further the purposes of the Dedham Vale National Landscape as set out in the next Section.

6. Seek to Further the Purposes - Additional Measures Considered

6.1 Scoping Exercise and Engagement

6.1.1 In addition to taking the National Landscape into consideration through all stages of the Project design as explained earlier, in line with the Defra guidance (Defra, 2024) additional 'appropriate, reasonable and proportionate steps' are under consideration in respect of the duty to seek to further the statutory purpose of the National Landscape. This is ongoing and being progressed in consultation with the DVNL Partnership and key stakeholders. The current position is set out below and a further update will be provided during the Examination.

6.1.2 A scoping exercise was undertaken, the output of which was a series of high-level themes with potential measures identified to address the seek to further duty which further consideration could be given to. This is in line with the Defra guidance (Defra, 2024) which states that '*a relevant authority should be able to demonstrate with proportionate, reasoned, and documented evidence the measures to which consideration has been given when seeking to further the statutory purposes of Protected Landscapes'.* The potential measures were identified as they would deliver enhancements for one or more of the special qualities and natural beauty indicators and help to support the objectives of the Dedham Vale AONB and Stour Valley Project Area Management Plan 2021-2026. These included:

- Heritage asset related projects – support heritage assets identified on the Heritage at Risk Register held by Historic England which are located within the Dedham Vale National Landscape and/or its setting
- Habitat enhancements projects – consider interventions or support work to create/enhance habitats
- Tree planting and other types of replanting – contribute to increasing tree canopy and woodland cover, field boundary replanting scheme
- Support existing projects – provide funding to support existing projects already initiated/being delivered to potentially widen the scope of the works covered or provide greater longevity.
- Rationalisation of existing infrastructure – an initial feasibility study looking at the potential feasibility of the future removal of an existing UK Power Networks 132 kV overhead line (known as the PJ Line)

6.1.3 National Grid's approach to the seek to further duty was discussed at a meeting with the National Landscape Team and relevant local authorities on 14 May 2025 to seek their feedback. The National Landscape Team lead the conservation of the protected landscape and comprise the core officer team supporting the DVNL Partnership. The DVNL Partnership comprises representatives from a diverse range of organisations with an interest in the National Landscape including the relevant local authorities. During this meeting the initial early ideas identified in the bullet points above were discussed.

6.1.4 Feedback was sought to ensure the stakeholders had the opportunity to shape and influence the approach being taken. Initial feedback was provided by the National Landscape Team following the meeting, and this has informed the current approach and package of measures being developed.

6.1.5 Whilst engagement is ongoing, feedback supported the provision of a financial contribution to support the delivery of a range of measures to further the purpose of the National Landscape. Such an approach has been followed on a number of other NSIPs where the section 85 duty (as amended by section 245 LURA 2023) has been engaged. In addition, there has been consideration of an initial feasibility study in respect of the potential for the future removal of an existing 132 kV overhead line operated by UK Power Networks (the PJ Line).

6.1.6 Natural England were not in attendance at the meeting with the DVNL Partnership Team and local authorities, but they have been contacted and kept informed of the proposed approach. Natural England has not provided any comments.

6.2 Financial Contribution

6.2.1 Feedback from the National Landscape Team supported a financial contribution directed to the DVNL Partnership. The financial contribution will be utilised to deliver benefits and provide enhancements to further the statutory purpose of the National Landscape in accordance with the objectives of the existing and future Management Plans. Given the delivery timeframe for the Project, the draft Dedham Vale National Landscape and Stour Valley Project Area Management Plan 2026-2031 (DVNL Partnership, 2025), which is being consulted upon until September 2025, is being utilised as a framework to identify the potential projects which could be delivered. The projects identified would also equally comply with the current Management Plan. At the time of the scoping exercise when the initial potential measures were identified, the draft Management Plan 2026-31 had not been published.

6.2.2 The contribution sum will be based on the identification of projects which aim to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the Dedham Vale National Landscape in line with the Management Plans, and in accordance with the Defra guidance (Defra, 2024) will be appropriate, reasonable and proportionate having regard to the impacts of the Project on the National Landscape.

6.2.3 This work has commenced already with the projects under consideration to be funded by the financial contribution being shaped around the draft Management Plan 2026-31 themes and principles identified to deliver the strategy aims for the themes. This is in addition to identifying funding for resourcing to deliver the projects and support for existing projects. A list of potential projects and resourcing proposed by the National Landscape Team under consideration has been set out in Annex A of Appendix A of this document.

6.2.4 The key principles of the proposed fund have been set out in a working draft in consultation with the National Landscape Team and Partnership and shared with the relevant local authorities and Natural England for their information. The working draft has been included in Appendix A of this document. This working draft includes the total of the fund which has been calculated based on an estimation of the costs associated with the identified projects.

6.3 Existing Electrical Infrastructure

6.3.1 In addition to a financial contribution, support was expressed by stakeholders to include within the package of measures a commitment to review the potential feasibility of the future removal of an existing 132 kV overhead line (known as the PJ Line). The PJ Line runs south of Bramford to the existing substation at Lawford and is owned and operated by UK Power Networks and not National Grid. This overhead line runs through both the Suffolk and Essex Coast and Heaths National Landscape and the Dedham Vale National Landscape.

6.3.2 It is understood from an initial discussion with UK Power Networks that in the longer term the delivery of the Project could potentially, from a network perspective, enable part of the PJ Line removal. However, this would be a substantial costly and complex project with significant works required to the UK Power Networks network with uncertain timescales. A number of factors would need to be resolved to facilitate its removal including technical matters, funding, consenting, planning permission, land ownership, UK Power Networks interests and operational requirements. A commitment to removal of the PJ Line is not considered appropriate or proportionate to include as part of the Project works in the DCO given its anticipated cost, complexity and current uncertain status and taking account of the significance of effects to the National Landscape.

6.3.3 National Grid is therefore proposing the preparation of an initial feasibility study to assess feasibility for the potential PJ Line removal (including a review of the technical solution, funding, consenting, land ownership, operational requirements, programme and delivery options) in the longer term. This would be limited to a feasibility exercise and any steps beyond that regarding potential planning for the removal of the PJ Line would be for future consideration with relevant stakeholders (including UK Power Networks and Ofgem from a funding perspective) entirely outside of the Project and DCO.

7. Next Steps

7.1.1 National Grid will continue to engage and work with stakeholders to finalise the proposed package of measures to fulfil the duty to seek to further the statutory purposes of the Dedham Vale National Landscape.

7.1.2 A working draft document setting out the proposed package of measures and the key principles of the fund has been shared with the DVNL Partnership for their feedback. The DVNL Partnership has stated that they are broadly content subject to some final specific areas to agree. Natural England and the relevant local authorities have also been provided the document for their information. A copy of the working draft has been provided in Appendix A.

7.1.3 The package of measures is anticipated to be secured by a legal agreement. National Grid will work with the DVNL Partnership to agree the Heads of Terms for such a legal agreement, seeking to finalise the agreement prior to the close of the examination.

7.1.4 A further update will be provided during the Examination as discussions with the stakeholders progress.

Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Full Reference
AC	Alternating Current
AIS	Air Insulated Switchgear
AMS-OWSI	Archaeological Mitigation Strategy and Outline Written Scheme of Investigation
AONB	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (now 'National Landscape')
BNG	Biodiversity Net Gain
CoCP	Code of Construction Practice
CPRSS	Corridor Preliminary Routeing and Siting Study
CRoW	Countryside and Rights of Way
CSE	Cable Sealing End (compound)
CTMP	Construction Traffic Management Plan
DASSI	Design Approach for Site-Specific Infrastructure
DCO	Development Consent Order
DDR	Design Development Report
Defra	Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
DESNZ	Department for Energy Security and Net Zero
DVNL	Dedham Vale National Landscape and Stour Valley
EACN	East Anglia Connection Node
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
ES	Environmental Statement
GIS	Gas Insulated Switchgear
km	kilometre
kV	kilovolt
LCA	Landscape Character Area
LEMP	Landscape and Ecological Management Plan
LURA	Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023
LoD	Limits of Deviation
m	metre
NETS	National Electricity Transmission System
NPS	National Policy Statement
SQSS	Security and Quality of Supply Standard

Abbreviation	Full Reference
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest
VRA	Visual Receptor Area

Glossary

Term	Definition
Landscape character	A distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements in the landscape that makes one landscape different from another, rather than better or worse (taken from An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment, (Natural England, 2014))
Landscape Character Areas	These are the discrete geographical areas of a particular landscape type. Each has its own individual character and identity, even though it shares the same generic characteristics with other types (Natural England, 2014)
Landscape Character Types	These are distinct types of landscape that are relatively homogeneous in character. They are generic in nature in that they may occur in different areas in different parts of the country, but wherever they occur they share broadly similar combinations of geology, topography, drainage patterns, vegetation, historical land use, and settlement pattern (Natural England, 2014)
Landscape effects	Effects on the landscape as a resource in its own right (GLVIA3 (Landscape Institute and IEMA, 2013))
Landscape value	The relative value or importance attached to different landscapes by society on account of their landscape qualities (taken from Technical Guidance Note 02/21 Assessing landscape value outside national designations, (Landscape Institute, 2021))
Main Works Contractor	Company or individual responsible for the overall construction of a project
Natural beauty	The term 'natural beauty' is enshrined in the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 (it was also subsequently included in the Nature Conservation and Amenity Lands Order (NI) 1985). Natural beauty is not exhaustively defined in the legislation, but its meaning has been clarified and interpreted through a series of studies, guidance documents and public inquiries
Order Limits	The maximum extent of land within which the authorised development may take place
Overhead line	Conductor (wire) carrying electric current, strung from pylon to pylon
Pylons	Structures that support the overhead line (conductors). There are two types of pylons; suspension (line), where the conductors are simply suspended from the pylon, and tension (angle).
Residual effects	The consequence of an 'impact' of construction, operation and decommissioning of the Proposed Development after mitigation measures have been applied.
Significance (in EIA)	A measure of the importance or gravity of the environmental effect, defined by significance criteria specific to the environmental topic (Landscape Institute and IEMA, 2013)

Term	Definition
Special qualities	A statutory expression used in (amongst other places) sections 5 and 11A of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 (as amended) and section 87 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000. Paragraph 87 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 requires a conservation board to have regard to the purpose of increasing the understanding and enjoyment by the public of the special qualities of the area of outstanding natural beauty
Visual amenity	The overall pleasantness of the views people enjoy of their surroundings, which provides an attractive visual setting or backdrop for the enjoyment of activities of the people living, working, recreating, visiting or travelling through an area. [taken from GLVIA3 (Landscape Institute and IEMA, 2013)
Visual effects	Effects on specific views and on the general visual amenity experienced by people. (Landscape Institute and IEMA, 2013)
Visual Receptor Area	Geographic area used to group visual receptors for the purposes of the visual assessment. Boundaries were identified based on geographical location, shared landscape characteristics and a similarity in the nature of views.
Visual receptors	Individuals and/or defined groups of people who have the potential to be affected by a proposal. (Landscape Institute and IEMA, 2013)

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Appendix A. Working Draft - Furthering the Purposes Measures

nationalgrid

Appendix A
Working Draft - Furthering the Purposes Measures

A.1 Furthering the Purposes Measures

Introduction

This document sets out the package of measures being provided by the Norwich to Tilbury reinforcement project (referred to hereafter as the 'Project') to address Section 85 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CRoW Act) duty 'to seek to further the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the area'.

The package of measures comprises:

- A financial contribution in the form of the Dedham Vale National Landscape Fund
- Undertaking/commissioning a piece of work to look at the feasibility of the future removal of an existing UK Power Networks 132 kV overhead line (known as the PJ Line).

Further detail is provided in relation to each measure below.

Dedham Vale National Landscape Fund and Key Principles

This section sets out the principles of the Dedham Vale National Landscape Fund. The key principles that will form the basis of the development and delivery of the Dedham Vale National Landscape Fund to be implemented within the boundaries of the Dedham Vale National Landscape and its setting are set out in Table 1. The fund will be secured under a legal agreement which will be entered into with Suffolk County Council on behalf of the Dedham Vale National Landscape and Stour Valley Partnership (DVNL Partnership).

The key principles of the Dedham Vale National Landscape Fund are set out in Table 1.

Principle	Detail
Fund	The fund will be paid to Suffolk County Council for onward payment to the DVNL Partnership to deliver benefits and provide enhancement to further the statutory purposes of the National Landscape as set out in section 85 of the CRoW Act 2000 and the paragraphs 5.10.7 to 5.10.8 of the Overarching National Policy Statement for Energy (EN-1).
Mechanism for delivery	A legal agreement
Geographical scope	The geographical scope of the fund includes the boundaries of the Dedham Vale National Landscape and its setting where projects will contribute to the conservation and enhancement of natural beauty of Dedham Vale National Landscape.

Principle	Detail
Scope of Projects	The purpose of the fund is to deliver benefits and to enhance the Dedham Vale National Landscape and its setting. The identification of projects will be based on (but not limited to) a long list of projects provided by the Dedham Vale National Landscape Team set out in Annex A. The final project scope and application of the funding will be determined by the DVNL Partnership but must deliver projects which seek to further the statutory purposes of the Dedham Vale National Landscape and are in accordance with the relevant Management Plan for the protected landscape. The fund should give priority to projects or measures within the National Landscape with at least 85% being spent on projects delivering enhancements within the designated boundary, or such other percentage agreed by the Project Delivery Panel.
Fund payment	A one-off payment of £2,426,752
Fund timing	The fund would be made available as a single one-off payment made by the applicant prior to the commencement of works within the National Landscape. It will then be at the discretion of the DVNL Partnership as to the timing of when projects or initiatives which have benefited from the fund are brought forward. The fund should be spent within 30 years following payment unless otherwise agreed by National Grid at the Project Delivery Panel.
Indexation	To be agreed
Project Delivery Panel	A Project Delivery Panel will be established to authorise non-material changes to the activity throughout the lifetime of delivery of the Dedham Vale National Landscape Fund and to oversee any requirements for reporting on expenditure and outcomes. The Project Delivery Panel will comprise at least one representative from National Grid and at least one representative from the DVNL Partnership.
Monitoring	A report will be provided to National Grid detailing the annual expenditure of the fund on the anniversary of the date the fund was paid and then annually thereafter.

Existing UK Power Networks 132 kV overhead line (PJ Line)

The PJ Line is owned and operated by UK Power Networks and not National Grid. The PJ Line is an existing 132 kV overhead line which runs south of Bramford to an existing substation at Lawford through both the Suffolk and Essex Coast and Heaths National Landscape and the Dedham Vale National Landscape.

It is understood from an initial discussion with UK Power Networks that in the longer term the delivery of the Project could potentially, from a network perspective, enable part of the PJ Line removal. However, this would be a substantial costly and complex project in itself with

significant works required to the UK Power Networks' network with uncertain timescale. A number of factors would need to be resolved to facilitate its removal including technical matters, funding, consenting, planning permission, land ownership, UK Power Networks interests and operational requirements. A commitment to removal of the PJ Line is not considered appropriate or proportionate to include as part of the Project works in the DCO given its anticipated cost, complexity and current uncertain status and taking account of the significant of effects to the National Landscape.

National Grid is therefore proposing the preparation of an initial feasibility study to assess feasibility for the potential PJ Line removal (including a review of the technical feasibility, funding, consenting, land ownership, operational requirements, programme and delivery options) in the longer term. This would be limited to a feasibility exercise and any steps beyond that regarding potential planning for the removal of the PJ Line would be for future consideration with relevant stakeholders (including UK Power Networks and Ofgem from a funding perspective) entirely outside of the Project and the Development Consent Order.

Annex A. List of Potential Projects

Annex A
List of Potential Projects

A list of potential projects which the Dedham Vale National Landscape Fund is to be based on (but not limited to) has been outlined below. This list has been provided by the National Landscape Team and is based on emerging Management Plan Principles which aim to conserve and enhance natural beauty of Dedham Vale National Landscape.

Management Plan Principles (2026-31)		Activity to support delivery
Place		
Place 01	Support work that contributes to and protects the statutory purpose of the National Landscape, including conserving and enhancing defined features of landscape quality, scenic quality, relative wildness, tranquillity and natural and cultural heritage.	Landscape enhancement projects to support heritage and views
Place 06	Historic and locally distinctive character of rural settlements and buildings in the Dedham Vale National Landscape and Stour Valley project area will be maintained and strengthened. The use of sustainably sourced locally derived materials for restoration and conversion work will be encouraged. New developments will be expected to apply appropriate design guidance and to be complementary to local character in form, siting, scale, contribution to settlement pattern and choice of materials.	Commission study into the vernacular of the Dedham Vale for use by developers and planners
Place 08	The removal or mitigation of identified landscape detractors will be pursued	Commission study into identified detractors of Natural Beauty in Dedham Vale
Place 12	A collaborative long term ‘farm cluster’ approach to support the farming and landowner community to support the aims of the Dedham Vale National Landscape and Stour Valley management plan 2026-31 will be pursued.	Support Stour Valley Farmer Cluster (Co-ordinator)
Place 13	Support work to conserve and enhance the river and its tributaries landscape quality and wildlife habitat.	Delivery of Tributary, River, Wetland Enhancement Projects

Management Plan Principles (2026-31)		Activity to support delivery
People		
People 14	Support initiatives to make improvements to the Rights of Way Network to overcome barriers provide and improve countryside access, health and well-being opportunities, including, connecting with NHS social prescribing, enhanced way-marking, signposting and maintenance, new access. Support for investment in access from Environmental Land Management schemes and other opportunities.	Enhance Public Rights of Way network and access
People 15	Support work to enhance promoted routes and increase appropriate access in the Dedham Vale National Landscape and Stour Valley project area.	Enhance Promoted Routes Awareness (Stour Valley path and circular routes
People 16	Support initiatives to encourage more sustainable tourism including sustainable transport to and from the area and for travel within the area.	Support sustainable tourism initiatives (Walking and Riding infrastructure)
People 19	Support volunteering opportunities in the Dedham Vale National Landscape and Stour Valley project area, particularly those that contribute to the delivery of natural beauty.	Support volunteering opportunities in the Dedham Vale (tools, vehicles, promotions)
People 21	Support projects to broaden the appeal, understanding and engagement with the Dedham Vale National Landscape and Stour Valley project area to groups that are underrepresented in the current visitor profile.	Broaden awareness and understanding of Dedham Vale (Events, Promotions, Materials)
Nature		
Nature 22	Work in partnership to deliver on the apportioned targets in the Protected Landscapes Targets and Outcomes Framework.	Delivery of Protected Landscapes Targets and Outcomes Framework
Nature 23	Deliver the Dedham Vale National Landscape Nature Recovery Plan and support delivery of Local Nature Recovery Strategies	Delivery of Nature Recovery Plan
Nature 24	Support projects to create a greater understanding and connection between people and wildlife while at the same time seek to increase understanding of and reduce visitor pressures on sensitive sites	Greater Understanding and Reduce Disturbance at Sensitive Sites

Management Plan Principles (2026-31)		Activity to support delivery
Climate		
Climate 25	Support nature-based solutions that absorb carbon and reduce drivers and risks of climate change that support National Landscape purpose.	Nature Based Solution project
Climate 27	Support low carbon initiatives appropriate to the National Landscape designation.	Increase Understanding, Share Best Practice, Promote Action
Resourcing		
1.0 FTE Project Officer embedded in National Landscape Team		
Hosting, office accommodation, ICT, HR, line management, insurance, travel, training		
Enabling of community-led delivery to further support Management Plan principles		
Sponsor of Dedham Vale Sustainable Development Fund		
Sponsor Stour Valley Environment Fund		

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