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The Applicant

Your Ref:

Our Ref: EN020027

Date: 31 March 2026

Dear Mr Pepper

The Planning Act 2008 sections 89 and 123 and the Infrastructure Planning (Compulsory Acquisition) Regulations 2010 Regulation 6

Application by National Grid Electricity Transmission for an order granting development consent for the Norwich to Tilbury project

Procedural Decision following request to make changes to the application

We are writing to inform you of the procedural decision made by the Examining Authority (ExA) following change requests made by the applicant dated 27 March 2026. These are published in the examination library at references [CR1-001] to [CR1-017] (inclusive) and [CR2-001] to [CR2-017] (inclusive) and can be viewed on the [project webpage](#) of the National Infrastructure Planning website.

The cover letter for change request 1 [\[CR1-001\]](#) provides a brief description of the changes proposed as "...to increase the Order Limits to facilitate works required for the protection of the existing Thames to Buncefield Multifuel Pipeline, west of Langdon Hills Golf Club." The applicant expands upon this description in the Overview Report – Change Request 1 (Bulphan) [\[CR1-012\]](#). The change responds to feedback concerning the potential for accelerated corrosion on existing buried metallic services received from the British Pipeline Agency Ltd who act as the agent for the owner, United Kingdom Oil Pipelines Limited.

The cover letter for change request 2 [\[CR2-001\]](#) provides a brief description of the changes proposed as "...to amend the Order Limits in order to support a small modification to the route of the Applicant's construction access (for use when a third-party access is not available) and a further small modification to the route for the private permanent Abnormal Indivisible Load access route to the proposed East Anglian Connection Node substation". The applicant expands upon this description in the Overview Report – Change Request 2 (Little Bromley) [\[CR2-012\]](#). This advises that the change is in

response to further engagement with landowners and the change is intended to reduce temporary and permanent impacts on land uses.

The background to both of these change requests was previously provided in the applicant's notification letters [\[AS-049\]](#) and [\[AS-050\]](#) dated 12 December 2025.

The applicant accepts that Regulations 5 to 19 of the CA Regulations are engaged for both submissions (paragraph 6.1.6 of both [\[CR1-012\]](#) and [\[CR2-012\]](#)).

The ExA notes the applicant's intended approach to the submission of the proposed changes and the further proposed consultation it intends to undertake should the change requests be accepted. It was also noted that the proposed consultation broadly aligns with the Planning Inspectorate's guidance entitled '[Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects: Changes to an application after it has been accepted for examination](#)'. The ExA has reviewed the information provided and assessed the applicant's request in line with this guidance.

The description of the proposed changes considered by the ExA are set out below:

Change Request	Area of proposed change and description
1	<p>Bulphan Changes to third party access and works (Section H): an increase in the order limits to facilitate works required for the protection of the existing Thames to Buncefield Multifuel Pipeline, west of Langdon Hills Golf Club.</p>
2	<p>Little Bromley Change to the East Anglia Connection Node access (Section C): an amendment to the order limits in order to support a modification to the route of the applicant's construction access (for use when a third-party access is not available) and a further modification to the route for the private permanent abnormal indivisible load access route.</p>

The detailed description of each change and the applicant's justification for each can be found in the overview reports [\[CR1-012\]](#) and [\[CR2-012\]](#).

The changes result in additional land being required and therefore have the potential to increase the interference with landowners' rights. Consequently the ExA agrees that the proposed changes trigger Regulations 5 to 19 (inclusive) of the Infrastructure Planning (Compulsory Acquisition) Regulations 2010 (CA Regulations).

With regard to assessment of likely significant effects of the proposed changes, the ExA notes the applicant's documents [\[CR1-016\]](#) and [\[CR2-016\]](#), both of which conclude the proposed design changes would not introduce new or different likely significant environmental effects compared to those reported in the Environmental Statement [APP-123] to [\[APP-287\]](#) (inclusive), [\[AS-026\]](#) and [\[AS-068\]](#).

Having regard to this, the ExA is satisfied that:

- There would be no new or different likely significant effects, either alone or in combination, to those identified in the Environmental Statement as a result of either of the change requests.
- The proposed changes are not so substantial, individually or cumulatively, that they would constitute a materially different project, in that they would lead to the project being different in nature or substance to that which was originally applied for.

However, both changes have the potential to increase interference with landowners' rights, therefore Regulations 5 to 19 of the CA Regulations are triggered. Irrespective of this, in accordance with Regulation 6 of the CA Regulations, the ExA considers the proposed changes requests 1 (Bulphan) and 2 (Little Bromley) can be accepted into the examination. In reaching this decision the ExA is satisfied that both change requests comply with the requirements of Regulation 5 of the CA Regulations.

The ExA is satisfied that there is sufficient time within the examination for the proposed changes to be properly and fairly examined, including the opportunity for written submissions and any oral representations to be made at any hearings that are required, along with the procedural requirements of the CA Regulations.

The ExA notes that consent of all those with an interest in the land has not yet been obtained, but that the applicant submitted documents in compliance with Regulation 5 of the CA Regulations. The applicant is reminded of its obligations to notify the affected persons in accordance with the requirements of Regulations 7, 8 and 9 of the CA Regulations.

In compliance with Regulations 7, 8 and 9 of the CA Regulations, notifications should be carried out in accordance with the timescales set out in the accelerated programme detailed in Table 6.2 of both overview report documents [\[CR1-012\]](#); and [\[CR2-012\]](#). The ExA stresses the importance of meeting the above-mentioned timescales, as set out in this accelerated programme. It should be ensured that the consultations still comply with the CA Regulations. The certificates of compliance, as required by Regulation 9, should be submitted promptly after the close of the consultation period and significantly earlier than the 10 working days set out in the Regulations. Failure to do this is likely to result in the hearings (scheduled in the examination timetable for week commencing 22 June 2026), having to be cancelled and rescheduled, resulting in a significant review to the remaining examination.

Consolidated versions (which relate to both change requests 1 and 2) of the draft DCO, the explanatory memorandum, statement of reasons including appendices A and B, funding statement, land rights tracker, and schedule of changes to the DCO should be submitted as soon as possible and no later than **Deadline 3 (Friday 10 April 2026)**. The remainder of the consequential amendments and updates to the plans and documents, as listed in the schedules of changes to DCO application documents table 2.1 [\[CR1-013\]](#) and [\[CR2-013\]](#), should be submitted as consolidated documents no later than **Deadline 4 (Tuesday 12 May 2026)**.

Next steps

It is now the applicant's responsibility to publicise the proposed changes that incorporate additional land in accordance with the CA Regulations. The applicant must advise the Norwich to Tilbury project case team of its proposed schedule as soon as possible, so that

an appropriate form for making relevant representations about the proposed provision for the Compulsory Acquisition of additional rights over land can be made available on the project webpage of the National Infrastructure Planning website.

Following completion of the relevant representation period, and if required, a single revised examination timetable, which addresses both change requests 1 and 2, will be issued under Rule 8(3) of the Infrastructure Planning (Examination Procedure) Rules 2010. As consultation regarding change requests 1 and 2 will coincide, the ExA does not consider it an effective use of examination time to issue separate revised examination timetables. Such a revised examination timetable would be likely to include relevant deadlines for written representations to be submitted, periods within which responses should be submitted and an indication of any necessary hearings.

It should be noted that the acceptance of the proposed changes is made on the basis that all the processes can be completed in the required time prior to the close of the examination, and in accordance with any revised examination timetable that may be published in due course. If this is not achieved, then the ExA will not be in a position to take the change request into account in its recommendation report to the Secretary of State as it will not have complied with the relevant statutory procedures.

Yours sincerely

Susan Hunt

Susan Hunt
Lead member of the Examining Authority

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