

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

Issue Specific Hearing 4

Date: Thursday 25 June 2026

Venue: Chelmsford Racecourse

The action points listed below in relation to issue specific hearing 4 (ISH4) are all directed to **the applicant only** unless otherwise stated in **bold**.

All responses should be provided by **deadline 6 (Tuesday 7 July)** unless otherwise stated.

Reference to '**all local authorities**' includes the following: Norfolk County Council (CC), Suffolk CC, Essex CC, South Norfolk District Council (DC), Mid Suffolk DC, Babergh DC, Tendring DC, Colchester City Council, Braintree DC, Chelmsford City Council, Brentwood Borough Council (BC), Basildon BC and Thurrock Council.

Notes to applicant:

Separate detailed written responses must be provided at deadline 6 to all interested parties who made submissions at the hearing.

The examining authority (ExA) has concurrently issued a letter under Rule 17 of the Infrastructure Planning (Examination Procedure) Rules 2010 setting out socio economics questions which were not asked at ISH4 due to time constraints.

Responses should also be provided at deadline 6.

ISH4 ACTION POINTS	
Agenda item 5: landscape and visual effects	
5.1 Mitigation and compensation	
1	Provide an update on the progress of the draft section 106 agreement regarding landscape enhancement (a response is sought from both the applicant and all local authorities).
2	Provide a draft requirement (agreed where possible with all local authorities) relating to submission of a scheme for landscape enhancement in the event that a completed (signed and dated) legal agreement is not submitted before the end of the examination.
3	Provide details of an outline offsite planting scheme to provide a framework prior to the submission of a unilateral undertaking which would secure such a scheme.
4	Provide a written response regarding an adaptive approach to the standard 5 year time period for reinstatement of failed planting to take account of factors such as location and local conditions.

5.2 Colne Valley	
5	Villages Against Pylons to submit its consultant's comments regarding the visual and functional linkages between the Colne valley and the Dedham Vale National Landscape.
5.3 Limits of deviation	
6	Provide further comments regarding limiting movement of pylons closer to Hines Close Aldham.
7	Suffolk CC to provide to the applicant as soon as possible a list of further sensitive locations it wishes to see included in commitment GG34 of the outline code of construction practice and the applicant is to respond at deadline 6.
5.4 Other landscape matters	
8	Check and confirm dimensions of fencing and compound sizes for link pillars within the Dedham Vale National Landscape and update drawings where relevant.
9	Consider design details of link pillars and their compounds in the context of updating the DASSI, the new requirement as suggested by Essex County Council, or altering requirement 12 regarding above ground structures.
10	Clarify which areas of the Dedham Vale National Landscape are likely to suffer direct effects from night time construction lighting, how frequent and for what duration such effects would be, and if any mitigation is possible.
11	Respond to the comments of Ms Pearson of Pylons East Anglia regarding dark skies along the whole route.
12	Respond to ExA question: In your response to ExQ2 GEN2.3 you described 'significant magnification' as an effect that is 'significantly greater/ larger/ magnified' than those reported as a result of the proposed development in isolation and the use of 'significant magnification' considers where further significant effects are likely cumulatively. Considering this in the context of cumulative landscape and visual effects, is there a threshold for landscape and visual effects above which significant magnification is identified? Can you provide some specific examples that illustrate significantly greater, larger and magnified?
13	Respond to ExA question: In your response to ExQ2 [REP5-211], Appendix E includes a series of drawings illustrating the location and geographical extent of the cumulative landscape and visual effects. These are particularly helpful and the ExA requests that a similar package of drawings is provided for significant (non-cumulative) landscape and visual effects together (by deadline 7).
14	Respond to ExA question: ExQ2 [REP5-211] asked about sequential impacts on users of the PROW network. In response you identified users of the Essex Way and NCN Route 50 as likely to experience significant cumulative effects. Can you confirm what proportion of these routes would be subject to significant cumulative effects? What mitigation, if any, might be appropriate for these routes, and how would it be secured?
15	Provide further specific details as to how impacts on individual veteran trees have been avoided.

16	Provide further indicative details on permanent spoil bund hatches including parameters of size, mass, heights, slope angles, potential landscaping and consideration of effects on surrounding landscapes and nearby heritage assets. Provide information on how the finer details would be agreed and controlled, and how the spoil bund hatches would be monitored and managed in the long term, including in relation to the control of invasive species.
Agenda item 6: Noise and vibration	
17	Provide further information on the potential to utilise the North Falls/ Five Estuaries haul road off Bentley Road, including if it would be fit and capable of use by the proposed development. If fit and capable for use by the proposed development: a) when will a decision regarding the use of the haul road for the proposed development be made? b) how will that use be secured? (ie by virtue of a commitment within the code of construction practice, by a requirement within the development consent or by some other mechanism)
18	Respond to Tendring DC's comments regarding the ExA's question concerning the applicant's response to ExQ2 DCO 2.S8, where Tendring DC's views were sought on the applicant's suggestion concerning the potential to utilise the North Falls/ Five Estuaries haul road off Bentley Road, mitigation measures (standard and bespoke) and comments regarding vibration from construction traffic on the public highway.
19	Tendring DC to provide written submissions in regard to the applicant's response to ExQ2 2.S8, especially in regard to mitigation measures required, standard and/ or bespoke, in the light of the applicant's suggested potential to utilising the North Falls/ Five Estuaries haul road off Bentley Road and whether this would address the concerns it has raised to date.
20	Tendring DC : the applicant at agenda item 6.2, second bullet point, was asked to explain how the ExA can be satisfied the 'Potential Mitigation Options' [APP-259] at table A14.3.7 (Indicative Mitigation Options) will be adequately secured and delivered to the satisfaction of the relevant local authorities. The applicant provided a verbal response and the ExA asked whether any local authorities wished to respond. The ExA was advised Tendring DC had left the meeting but would respond in writing. Tendring DC are asked to review the recording or transcript and respond to the applicant's submissions made during the hearing on this matter.

21	In response to the ExA's question concerning why the decibel noise levels in requirement 14 of the draft DCO had been set as they have, the applicant referred to comparing the substation noise level against other guidance, including BS8233, World Health Organisation guidance and guidance from the Association of Noise Consultants. The applicant stated guidance indicates that an external level of 35 dBA noise rating level is low and would provide appropriate internal noise levels, including at night, even with open windows, and would therefore be below the point at which adverse effects would occur. The applicant was asked to provide evidence supporting their statements on this matter and to demonstrate and explain why a 35 dBA noise rating level would be acceptable in this instance, especially when ES appendix 14.3 entitled 'EACN Substation Operational Noise Assessment' [APP-259] states: i. you have used BS 4142:2014+A1:2019 to undertake the assessment of operational noise (Section 14.2); ii. the significant observed adverse effect level (SOAEL) rating level is equal to or greater than 35 dB L_{Ar,Tr} or 10 dB above the background sound level (≥ 35 dB L_{Ar,Tr} or ≥ 10 dB), whichever is higher and (paragraph 14.2.11); and iii. the summary of representative background sound levels, table A14.3.2, demonstrates representative background noise levels at its chosen monitoring locations of between 21 and 25 dB_{LA90} (Nighttime). Additionally, the ExA requests an explanation as to why you are seeking to establish the noise rating level as equal to or greater than 35 dB L_{Ar,Tr} or 10 dB above the background sound level (≥ 35 dB L_{Ar,Tr} or ≥ 10 dB), whichever is higher (SOAEL) rather than seeking to achieve either No Observed Effect Level (NOEL) or as a worst case scenario the Lowest Observed Adverse Effect Level (LOAEL). Please note the ExA is aware of the government guidance for the Method implementation document (MID) for BS 4142 dated 22 December 2023, which advises: <i>"You must not use BS 8233 to assess noise pollution from an industrial or commercial sound. BS 8233 is a method to identify sound insulation requirements from constant sound sources such as traffic or railways. It does not take into account any acoustic features such as tonality, impulsivity intermittency [or] other distinguishable features usually associated with industrial and commercial sound sources..."</i> The ExA also notes this element of the proposed development is a substation so the loading will vary, so tonality will vary.
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22	a) Respond to comments made by Braintree DC regarding the Noise and Vibration Management Plan, as identified in the outline Code of Construction Practice [REP5-139] at NV05, including whether a stage is missing in the process regarding local authorities needing to approve the document. b) Respond to comments from both Braintree DC and Babergh DC and Mid Suffolk DC's regarding the complaints and enforcement procedures related to the Noise and Vibration Management Plan, especially in regard to compliance monitoring, reporting and enforcement, and how these procedures will operate in practice.
Agenda item 7: Aviation safety	
23	Provide further detail, including diagrams, further to the response to ExQ2 SS2.6 regarding other aerodromes which operate safely on a daily basis with electricity infrastructure nearby.
24	Continue positive dialogue with the aerodromes where matters are outstanding. Provide an update on how you are working towards resolution of outstanding matters and towards resolution via the statements of common ground.