The Great Grid Upgrade

North Humber to High Marnham

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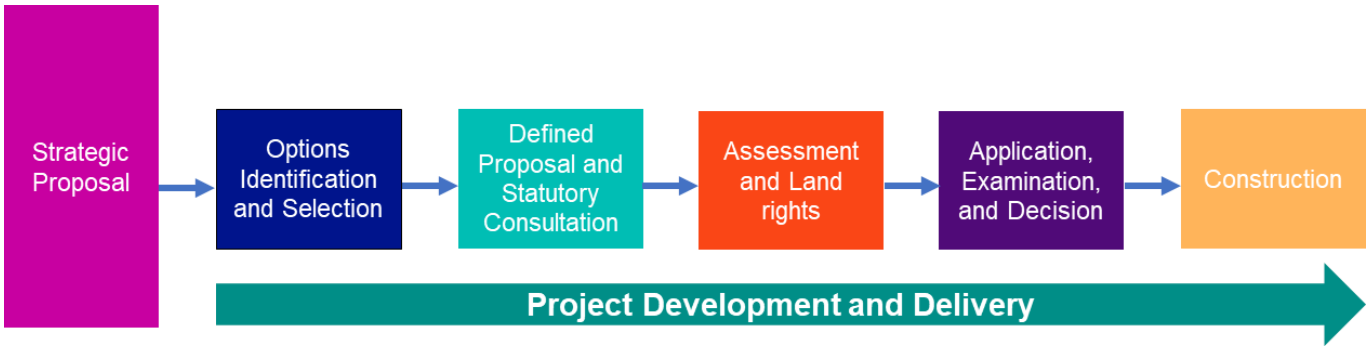
Executive summary

Purpose of the Strategic Options Report

This Strategic Options Report Update (SOR Update) has been prepared by National Grid Electricity Transmission plc (NGET) as part of the ongoing strategic options assessment and decision-making process involved in promoting new transmission projects. It presents the findings of our options appraisal process and is intended to provide a clear justification and evidence for our decision-making of a preferred strategic option for the North Humber to High Marnham and Grimsby to Walpole projects (the Projects).

The stages of NGET's process-based approach when transmission system works are identified that would require additional consents and/or permissions are shown below:

Figure ES 1 – NGET approach to consenting process



This report forms part of the 'Application, Examination and Decision' stage.

This executive summary provides an overview of the contents of this report and highlights key areas relevant to the application for development consent, including:

- reasons why the transmission system in the Humber/Trent and Lincolnshire regions need to change;
- a summary of strategic options identified by NGET for providing additional transmission system capability;
- how NGET identified and evaluated strategic options, and
- the options that NGET intends to take forward to the 'Application, Examination and Decision' stage.

How the electricity system is planned and operated

National Grid Electricity Transmission

NGET, the owner of the transmission system in England and Wales, holds an electricity transmission licence that permits transmission ownership activities and is regulated by Ofgem (the Office of Gas and Electricity Markets). Our transmission licence requires us to provide an efficient, economic and co-ordinated transmission system in England and Wales.

Transmission services include maintaining reliable electricity supplies and offering to construct new transmission system assets for new connections to the National Electricity Transmission System ('NETS').

In accordance with transmission licence requirements, we ensure that the transmission system in England and Wales meets the requirements in respect of transmission system security and quality of service at all times. As part of this requirement, we must ensure that sufficient transmission system capability is provided to meet consumer demand and generator customer requirements and wider transmission system needs that exist and/or are expected.

When planning changes to our transmission system, we must be efficient, co-ordinated and economical and have regard to the desirability of preserving amenity, in line with the duties under sections 9 and 38 of the Electricity Act 1989 ('the Electricity Act').

The electricity transmission system

The transmission system in England and Wales serves the purpose of transporting large amounts of energy across the country. The system connects large energy generators such as wind farms, nuclear or combined cycle gas turbine (CCGT) facilities with distribution systems which take energy on to homes and businesses.

Transmission voltages up to 400,000 volts (400 kV) are used to move bulk energy, because at this voltage level, it is possible to transport the energy whilst also minimising the amount of power lost through electrical properties of the circuits.

The transmission system connects to distribution systems across the country, which in turn transport energy on to homes and businesses across England and Wales, reducing the voltage as the energy progresses through the system. Significant amounts of energy are especially drawn from the transmission system at large demand centres like in the North along the M62/M18 corridor, the Midlands, the M4 corridor and the South East. As the UK decarbonises its economy, demand for electricity is expected to rise as more people use electrified transport and electricity to heat their homes.

Originally the transmission system was constructed in the 1960s to move power mainly from the coal fired power stations based near the coal fields of the North and Midlands to demand centres. More low carbon generation - such as nuclear and wind - is connecting to the system, however it is located in different areas to older fossil fuel power stations. This, alongside growing demand needed to decarbonise our economy, is requiring the transmission system to change and in some cases increased capacity transmission infrastructure is needed.

The legislation, policy and regulatory framework that we work within

UK energy policy

In 2019, the previous UK Government committed to achieving net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. In addition, the current UK Government has committed to achieving a net zero electricity system by 2030.

These commitments require the UK to move away from fossil fuels and to adopt alternative sources of energy to power homes, transport, and businesses. The Government has set out how it plans to deliver on these commitments within multiple plans including:

- British Energy Security Strategy (BESS, April 2022); and
- Powering Up Britain and Powering Up Britain: Energy Security Plan (March 2023).

Key ambitions made within these plans to achieve net zero include:

- up to 50 GW of offshore wind connected by 2030 including 5 GW of which will be offshore floating wind; and
- up to eight nuclear reactors being progressed reaching up to 24 GW to be achieved by 2050.

Key commitments that were made by the UK Government in the Powering Up Britain Strategy with regards to electricity network development include:

- For the appointed Electricity Networks Commissioner to provide recommendations to Government in June 2023 on how grid delivery can be accelerated.
- To work with industry and Ofgem to reform the grid connections process, including publishing a connections action plan in 2023.

National Planning Policy

Electricity Network Infrastructure Developments

Developing the electricity transmission system in England and Wales subject to the type and scale of the project, may require one or more statutory consents.

For the purposes of this report, it is assumed that the proposed developments would be consented under the Planning Act 2008. The Planning Act 2008 defines developments of new electricity Overhead Lines (OHLs) of 132 kV and above as Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs) requiring a Development Consent Order (DCO) (subject to certain statutory thresholds). Applications for a DCO must be determined in accordance with National Policy Statements (NPSs) in most cases. NPSs set out the need and government policy relating to NSIPs. The NPSs also form the primary basis on which DCO applications are determined by the relevant Secretary of State. Other material considerations can include local planning policies set out in relevant development plans by local planning authorities and national planning policy, for example the National Planning Policy Framework.

Five NPSs for energy infrastructure were designated by the Secretary of State in January 2024. The relevant NPS for electricity transmission infrastructure developments are the Overarching National Policy Statement for Energy (EN-1) and the National Policy Statement for Electricity Networks Infrastructure (EN-5), which is read in conjunction with EN-1. Further updates to EN-1 and EN-5 came into force on 6 January 2026, and this report has been updated where relevant to reflect those changes.

Demonstrating the need for a project

Part 3 of EN-1 sets out Government policy on the need for new NSIPs confirming that the UK needs a range of the types of energy infrastructure covered by the NPS and that "substantial weight" should be given to the urgent need for the types of infrastructure covered by the NPS when considering applications for DCOs.

Assessment principles applied by decision maker

Part 4 of EN-1 sets out the general policies that are applied in determining DCO applications relating to new energy infrastructure.

Part 2 of EN-5 sets out the assessment principles in the specific context of electricity networks infrastructure.

Principles of particular importance for transmission infrastructure projects include:

- presumption in favour of development;
- the critical national priority for low carbon infrastructure;
- consideration of alternatives;
- good design;
- climate change adaptation and resilience;
- networks DCO applications submitted in isolation;
- Electricity Act duties; and
- adverse impacts and potential benefits

The need case for reinforcement of the transmission system

Consistent with the Government's Net Zero target of connecting up to 50 gigawatts (GW) of offshore wind by 2030, there has been, and continues to be, growth in the volume of renewable and zero carbon generation that is seeking to connect to the electricity transmission system in the Humber/Trent and Lincolnshire regions.

The need for a co-ordinated strategy to meet the 2030 Net Zero target is reflected in the National Policy Statement for Electricity Networks Infrastructure (EN-5), which identifies a policy imperative in support of offshore-onshore transmission. This is further reflected in the Holistic Network Design (HND) prepared by the then Electricity System Operator (ESO), whose responsibilities have been assumed by the National Energy System Operator (NESO). The HND identifies the pathway programme for the transmission infrastructure needed, both onshore and offshore, to support offshore wind developments.

The pathway programme identified in the HND has a direct bearing upon the proposed programme of reinforcement work within the Humber/Trent and Lincolnshire regions. The HND has been developed to identify and recommend a co-ordinated set of onshore and offshore network developments that best meet a range of assessment criteria (economic, environmental, deliverability and community impacts) to enable the connection of new offshore wind generation in line with the government's 2030 target. The offshore wind developments considered are mainly around Scotland and the East Coast of England, with connections at a number of sites along the east coasts of both Scotland and England. The connections drive the need for local works in the vicinity of the connections, and the need to accommodate increased power flows from the North and East to the Midlands and South. The HND assessments included existing and future contracted onshore and offshore generation to ensure that any recommended developments account for all of the known requirements. HND includes sites in the Humber/Trent and Lincolnshire regions for the connection of both onshore and offshore generation and recommends reinforcements to provide network capacity to allow for the increased power flows through the regions. This Strategic Options Report (SOR) describes the future network requirements, and the options appraised to meet these requirements.

There are areas within each of the Humber/Trent and Lincolnshire regions where a number of generation projects have contracted with the NESO to connect to the electricity transmission system. National Grid has assessed the likely impacts associated with the connection of the total volume of new generation (the 'generation group') for each of the two areas identified within the Humber/Trent and Lincolnshire regions.

The two generation groups identified for the Humber/Trent and Lincolnshire regions are referred to (in this report) as the:

- Creyke Beck area generation group; and
- East Coast (South Humber to North Wash) generation group.

Each of these areas need to comply with the generation connection requirements within the National Electricity Transmission System Security and Quality of Supply Standard[1] (NETS SQSS).

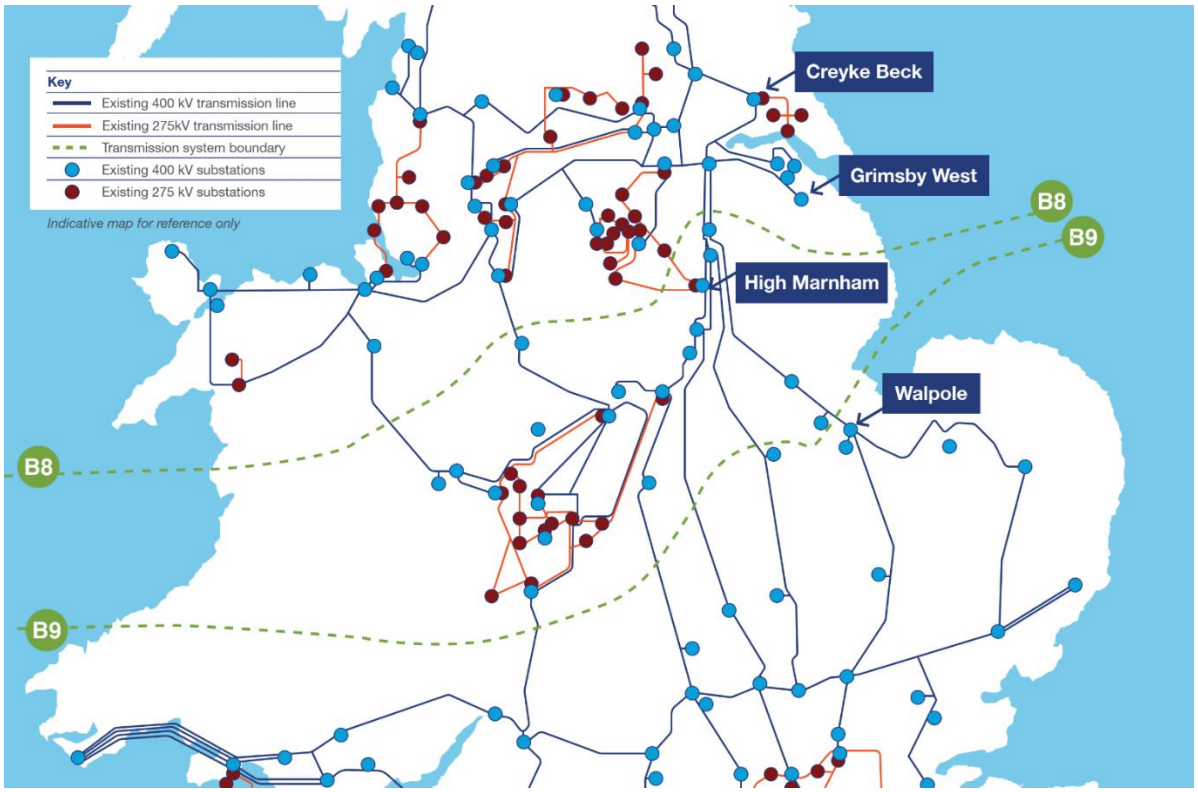
There is also a need to reinforce two “boundaries” (B8 and B9) within the transmission system. A “boundary”, in this context, splits the system into two parts, crossing critical circuit paths that carry power between areas and where power flow limitations may be encountered. Boundaries help identify regions where reinforcement is most needed by enabling analysis of power transfers between separated areas. This requirement has been identified within the Economy Planned Transfer assessment as set out in the NETS SQSS. This assessment considers the amount of generation forecast to cross a boundary by 2030.

We also assessed the impacts that the additional contracted generation capacity beyond 2030 would have on volumes of electricity that flow between parts of the transmission system that contain significant amounts of demand and generation. The system boundaries considered as part of our assessment and referred to in this SOR Update are:

- North of England to Midlands Boundary ‘B8’, and
- Midlands to South of England Boundary ‘B9’.

Each of the circuits which cross the B8 and B9 boundary has a capacity during the winter Average Cold Spell (ACS) period. This is referred to as the “pre fault capacity“. The “post fault capacity” is defined by the remaining capacity across a boundary following the worst fault “secured event”. Our assessment shows that the Creyke Beck area generation group and the East Coast generation group both require additional transmission capacity across the B8 and B9 boundaries to facilitate the connections in both areas.

Figure ES 2 – B8 and B9 System Boundaries



[1] National Electricity Transmission System Security and Quality of Supply Standard, NESO https://www.neso.energy/industry-information/codes/security-and-quality-supply-standard-sqss

Table ES 1 summarises the results from our updated assessment of the existing transmission system capacity/capability and the volume of additional transmission system capacity/capability needed to meet both the boundary requirements of 2035 as well as the further contracted generation connection requirements beyond that target date. That additional capability is needed so that all transmission licence obligations can be met. The boundary requirements are based on the Future Energy Scenarios (FES) and the Electricity Ten-Year Statement (ETYS) and are an average of the capability needed to meet 95% range of the 90th percentile of network conditions across the three FES that meet the government's net zero ambition.

Table ES 1 – Existing boundary performance by 2035 and generation group capacity to last contract date currently 2039 in the TEC register which will be facilitated by proposed need

	Generation Group or Boundary Export	2035 Post Fault Capability	2035 Post Fault Capacity	Capability Deficit(-) / Surplus(+)	Capacity Deficit(-) / Surplus (+)	Secured Event Fault
Creyke Beck contracts to 2039 (Generation)	19,764.7 MW	6,930 MW	6,930 MW	-12,834.7 MW	-12,834.7 MW	Creyke Beck – Keadby 400kV
East Coast contracts to 2035 (Generation)	16,677.0 MW	0 MW	0 MW	-16,677.0 MW	-16,677.0 MW	N/A
B8 – 2035 (Boundary)	30,782 MW	19,096 MW	19,096 MW	-11,686 MW	-11,686 MW	Keadby – West Burton 400kV double circuit
B9 – 2035 (Boundary)	25,901 MW	14,104 MW	18,033 MW	-11,797 MW	-7,868MW	Walpole – Bicker Fen/ Spalding 400kV double circuit

Table ES 1 identifies there are four distinct issues that the needs case identifies:

- Provision of circa 7GW capacity to the Creyke Beck area generation group.
- Provision of circa 7GW capacity to the East Coast area generation group
- Provision of 11,686MW of capability to the B8 boundary
- Provision of 11,797MW of capability to the B9 boundary

The remainder of this report considers strategic options that resolve the need set out above, alongside proposals set out in the EGL3 and EGL4 separate strategic options report.

Updated name for ‘new Creyke Beck substation’

The ‘new Creyke Beck substation’ is now known as ‘Birkhill Wood 400kV substation’. However, for clarity and consistency with the previous SOR, this SOR Update continues to refer to ‘new Creyke Beck substation’ throughout.

How we identified and assessed strategic options

In normal circumstances the transmission requirement for the generation groups should be less than the levels set out in Table ES 1 . This is due to the generation connection criteria in the SQSS requiring the network to be designed based upon typical power station operating regimes within a generating group, which does not assume full output from every generator connected, but a likely output instead.

Both Creyke Beck and East Coast generating groups contain significant levels of wind powered generation and it is therefore more likely that the group outputs will be close to the levels in Table ES 1 on windy days. On this basis, any further calibration of the additional transmission system capability is not considered necessary.

The additional transmission system capability required, as set out in Table ES 1 , needs to address two distinct sets of issues:

- Issue (a) - the need to provide a new AC transmission double circuit or multiple high voltage direct current (HVDC) connections, which would ensure compliance for the Creyke Beck area generation group connections, whilst also providing >6 GW of additional boundary capacity across the B8 boundary.
- Issue (b) - the need to provide a new AC transmission double circuit or multiple HVDC connections, which would provide capacity for the East Coast generation group connections, whilst also increasing the boundary capacity across B8 by an additional >6 GW (an increase of >12 GW capacity in total) and providing >6 GW of capacity across the B9 boundary.

The need to provide significant additional boundary capability and to connect several of the generators by 2035, together with the further contracted generation requirements, has resulted in options being assessed to meet all these requirements with the most efficient network improvements. This may mean that some of the connection capacity will be made available ahead of contracted dates.

We also evaluated the interactivity between the options considered in this report with the options that have been identified for the connection of offshore transmission circuits from Scotland, referred to as Eastern Green Link 3 (EGL 3) and Eastern Green Link 4 (EGL 4). EGL 3 and EGL 4 each consist of 2 GW voltage source convertor (VSC) HVDC transmission circuits. Together, EGL 3 and EGL 4 will transfer 4 GW of energy between Scotland and England to meet the requirements of generation connections in Scotland.

Based on current development proposals that inform the latest ETYS requirements, EGL 3 and EGL 4 are indicated to connect south of the Humber, possibly above the B8 boundary and definitely above the B9 boundary. The links were deemed to be required by 2030 in the Holistic Network Design (HND) and Network Options Assessment (NOA) refresh, published in July 2022.

The EGL 3 and EGL 4 projects will be subject to their own full review of strategic options. However, the location of the connection points selected for these projects has an impact on the extent of transmission system assets that could be required in the Lincolnshire region. We therefore undertook an interactivity assessment, to investigate how a connection location for EGL 3 and EGL 4, can impact upon the amount of additional transmission system infrastructure

that would be required in the immediate future. Our evaluation included consideration of interactions between EGL 3 and EGL 4 and options to resolve issue (b) described above.

To meet the 2035 requirements of B9 an additional double circuit from North Lincolnshire to Hertfordshire, referred to as LRN 4 in the Electricity System Operator's (as it was then known) Network Options Assessment Refresh 2021/22, was recommended. A further new double circuit crossing B9 to Walpole (WWNC) was recommended for development in subsequent years to meet further increases in the B9 requirement, this has since been discounted. The recommendations were based on the connection circuits for the East Coast generation group connecting to the existing transmission system to the North of B9, and therefore not providing any B9 capacity.

The strategic options we considered to resolve issue (a) (Creyke Beck area generation group connections and >6 GW capacity across B8) are:

- ECO 1 – New Creyke Beck to new High Marnham **85 km**
- ECO 2 – New Creyke Beck to Cottam **75 km**
- ECO 3 – New Creyke Beck to new Grimsby West, new Grimsby West to new Walpole B **225 km**
- ECO 4 – New Creyke Beck to new Grimsby West, new Grimsby West to new Weston Marsh substation(s) **200 km**
- ECSS 1 – Subsea from new Creyke Beck to new Walpole B **195 km**

The strategic options we considered to resolve issue (b) (East Coast generation group connections and the further >6 GW capacity across B8 (>12 GW total) and >6 GW of capacity across B9) are:

- ECO 5 – New Grimsby West to new Lincolnshire Connection substation(s), new Lincolnshire Connection substation(s) to new Walpole B **140 km**
- ECO 6 – New Grimsby West to new Lincolnshire Connection substation(s), Lincolnshire Connection substation(s) to new Weston Marsh substation(s), new Weston Marsh substation(s) to new Walpole B **140 km**
- ECSS 2 – Subsea new Grimsby West – new Offshore Connection Node – new Walpole B **155 km**

Our initial interactivity assessment to determine the best location for the connection of the EGL 3 and EGL 4 projects to provide an overall, best infrastructure solution considered the following strategic options:

- EGL Option 1 – both connect at new Lincolnshire Connection substation(s)
- EGL Option 2 – both connect at Cottam substation
- EGL Option 3 – both connect at new Walpole B substation
- EGL Option 4 – both connect at new Walpole B substation, with one project forming a three-ended circuit, connecting to new Lincolnshire Connection substation(s) and new Walpole B substation.

The appraisal of strategic options that could address the identified transmission system reinforcement needs considered the likely environmental and socio-economic effects, technical issues and cost that would be associated with each strategic option.

The results of our strategic options assessment

Issue (a)

ECO 1 and ECO 2 options would have a significantly shorter overhead line route than that of ECO 3 and ECO 4. They are expected to have lower environmental and socio-economic effects, as well as lower capital and lifetime costs. ECO 1 and ECO 2 are therefore preferred to ECO 3 and ECO 4 amongst the Creyke Beck area generation group onshore options.

ECO 1 has technical advantages when compared to ECO 2. ECO 1 performs better in terms of boundary capacity, while also being less constrained in terms of routeing due to the proposed connection to a new substation at High Marnham rather than Cottam. A comparison of the Cottam and High Marnham sites indicates that High Marnham offers substantial cost savings, as well as reduced constructability risks. Overall, therefore, ECO 1 is the preferred onshore option.

An offshore option, ECSS 1, has also been assessed. Based on the information currently available, technical, environmental and socio-economic factors are not considered to differentiate between offshore and onshore options. However, ECSS 1 was substantially more expensive than any of the onshore options.

We therefore consider that, overall, ECO 1 represents the most advantageous of the Creyke Beck area generation group options when balancing cost, technical performance and environmental and socio-economic effects.

Issue (b)

In terms of the East Coast generation group onshore options, ECO 5 and ECO 6 offer similar technical performance, and the transmission circuits are similar in length. This means that the levels of environmental and socio-economic effects associated with the transmission circuits would be expected to be similar. However, one key difference between these options is that additional substation(s) at Weston Marsh would be required for ECO 6.

The additional substation(s) have potential to result in long term landscape and visual effects due to the introduction of new substation infrastructure in a landscape which currently has little major development, although the new substation capacity, is required due to contracted generation and it should be included within the Project's scope as it would provide benefits such as a coordinated approach to consenting and delivery efficiencies.

Furthermore, situating the new infrastructure in the vicinity of the Spalding Tee, and turning the existing circuits into it would reduce network complexity. It was determined that this substation would be delivered as part the Grimsby to Walpole Project as it would provide benefits such as a coordinated approach to consenting and delivery efficiencies. ECO 6 is therefore the preferred onshore option.

An offshore option, ECSS 2, has also been assessed. Again, based on the information currently available, technical, environmental and socio-economic factors are not considered to differentiate between offshore and onshore options. However, ECSS 2 was substantially more expensive than either of the onshore options. This means that onshore options are preferred.

We therefore consider that, overall, ECO 6 represents the most advantageous of the East Coast generation group options when balancing cost, technical performance and environmental and socio-economic effects.

NGET therefore proposes to take forward the following options:

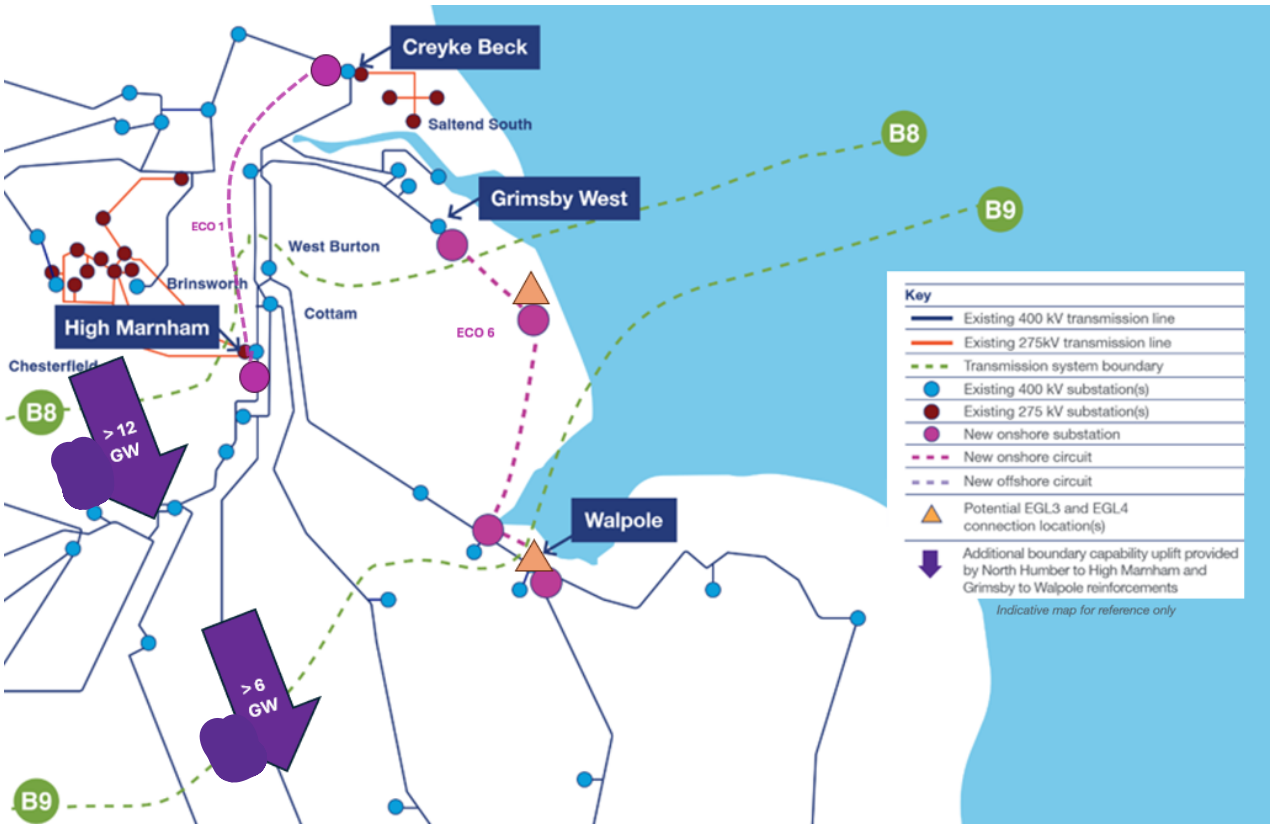
- To resolve Issue (a) - ECO 1 a new wholly or largely overhead line connection between new Creyke Beck substation to new High Marnham substation. With a high-level assessment capital cost of £734.2m and lifetime circuit cost of £704m. This has been assigned the project title of “North Humber to High Marnham”.
- To resolve Issue (b) – ECO 6 a new wholly or largely overhead line connection from a new Grimsby West substation to new Lincolnshire Connection substation(s), and new Lincolnshire Connection substation(s) to a new Walpole B substation via new Weston Marsh substation(s) following a route through Lincolnshire, with a route length of approximately 140km. A capital cost of £2,111.3m and lifetime circuit cost of £1,159m.

This report also recommends that EGL 3 and EGL 4 should be connected south of the B9 boundary to a Main Interconnected Transmission System substation, identified as new Walpole B substation.

As indicated above, moving EGL 3 and EGL 4 south of B9 will provide increased boundary capacity.

NGET initially planned to propose EGL Option 4 as the preferred option, which included a three-ended circuit connecting to new Lincolnshire Connection substations and the new Walpole B substation. However, a decision has now been made to take forward EGL Option 3, as the three-ended link is not necessary to meet the need case for the EGL 3/4 projects.

Figure ES 3 – The preferred options to progress, including EGL 3 and EGL 4 recommendations



Interaction with other projects

In March 2024, the ESO published the 'Beyond 2030' report (more information on this can be found in Appendix H). This included an option code 'EDEU', which includes scope to develop and construct a new 400kV High Marnham substation, in addition to reconfiguring the existing

electricity transmission system in the surrounding area. The new 400kV High Marnham substation is the southern connection point for ECO 1.

Option EDEU was recommended to proceed in the previous ESO report 'NOA 2021/22 Refresh', published in July 2022, where the option was stated as essential to deliver the 'Pathway to 2030' based on an 'Earliest Optimal Delivery Date' of 2028.

The project is being developed by NGET, and the project name is 'Brinsworth to High Marnham Uprating' (see project website[2] for more information).

We have evaluated the interactivity between the options considered in this report with the options that have been identified for the connection of offshore transmission circuits from Scotland, referred to as Eastern Green Link 3 (EGL 3) and Eastern Green Link 4 (EGL 4). EGL 3 and EGL 4 each consist of 2 GW voltage source convertor (VSC) high voltage direct current (HVDC) transmission circuits. Together, EGL 3 and EGL 4 will transfer 4 GW of energy between Scotland and England to meet the requirements of generation connections in Scotland.

Based on current development proposals that inform the latest ETYS requirements, EGL 3 and EGL 4 are indicated to connect south of the Humber, possibly above the B8 boundary and definitely above the B9 boundary. The links were deemed to be required by 2030 in the HND and NOA refresh, published in July 2022.

The EGL 3 and EGL 4 projects have been subject to their own full review of strategic options. However, the location of the connection points selected for these projects has an impact on the extent of transmission system assets that could be required in the Lincolnshire region. We therefore undertook an interactivity assessment, to investigate how a connection location for EGL 3 and EGL 4, could impact upon the amount of additional transmission system infrastructure that would be required in the immediate future. Our evaluation included consideration of interactions between EGL 3 and EGL 4 and options to resolve issue (b) described above.

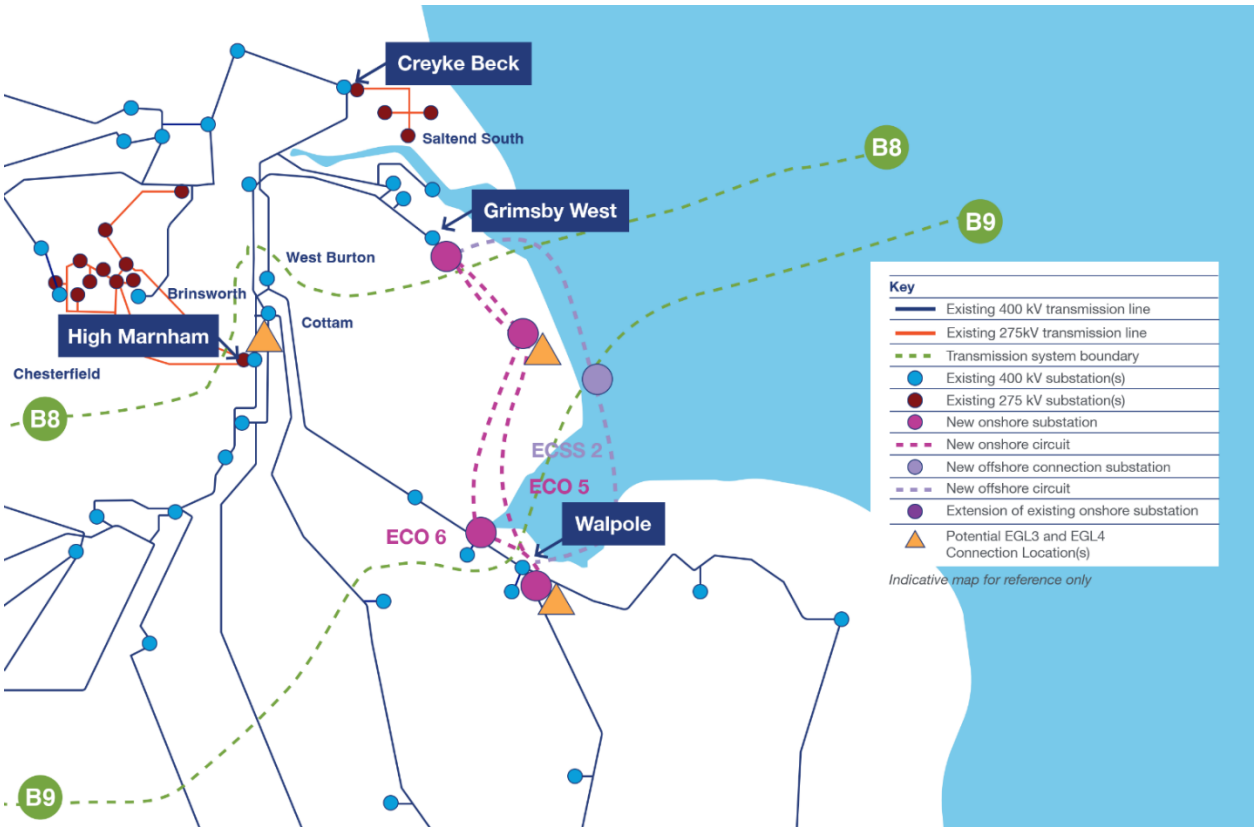
In developing and assessing the options we have considered the interaction of EGL 3 and EGL 4's connection locations, the connection requirements for the East Coast generation group, and the HND/NOA recommendations for two circuits across B9, to determine the overall optimum developments.

Our initial interactivity assessment to determine the best location for the connection of the EGL 3 and EGL 4 projects to provide an overall, best infrastructure solution considered the following strategic options:

- EGL Option 1 – both connect at new Lincolnshire Connection substation(s)
- EGL Option 2 – both connect at Cottam substation
- EGL Option 3 – both connect at new Walpole B substation
- EGL Option 4 – both connect at new Walpole B substation, with one project forming a three-ended circuit, connecting to new Lincolnshire Connection substation(s) and new Walpole B substation.

[2] Brinsworth to High Marnham project website https://www.nationalgrid.com/electricity-transmission/network-and-infrastructure/infrastructure-projects/brinsworth-high-marnham-uprating

Figure ES 4 – Proposed EGL 3 and EGL 4 connection locations



In the Beyond 2030 report, LRN 4 was superseded by LRN 6 which no longer includes the 90km of overhead line between North and South Lincolnshire, but this project has since evolved further and is now called Weston Marsh to East Leicestershire. This project has now completed non-statutory consultation and will be progressing to statutory consultation in September 2026. The project is still assumed to connect to the new Weston Marsh substation(s) being built as part of the Grimsby to Walpole project.

One more project, EGL 5 (Eastern Green Link 5) has a proposed strategic option that we have taken forward for option appraisal. This is known as Option 1 (LCS).

We are proposing that the EGL 5 project connects into the new Lincolnshire Connection substation(s), and therefore, there is a dependency between the preferred option for EGL 5 and the delivery of Grimsby to Walpole.

Conclusions

This Strategic Options Report (SOR) has reconsidered options to meet the revised Need Case set out in Chapter 4. After the reconsideration, there has been no change to the requirement that had been identified for the two sets of transmission circuits that contribute to NETS SQSS compliance. This requires the resolution of two distinct sets of issues, as follows:

- Issue (a) - the need to provide a new AC transmission double circuit or multiple HVDC connections, which would ensure compliance for the Creyke Beck area generation group connections, whilst also providing >6 GW of additional boundary capacity across the B8 boundary.
- Issue (b) - the need to provide a new AC transmission double circuit or multiple HVDC connections, which would provide capacity for the East Coast generation group connections,

whilst also increasing the boundary capacity across B8 by an additional >6 GW (an increase of >12 GW capacity in total) and providing >6 GW of capacity across the B9 boundary.

The findings of the options appraisal, which have considered a range of technical, environmental, socio economic and cost issues, are summarised below.

All the options considered in this report met the technical appraisal requirements of the Need Case, though some deliver greater benefits over others (for example ECO 1 over ECO 2).

Appraisal of the strategic options showed that ECO 1 and ECO 2 options would have a significantly shorter overhead line route than that of ECO 3, ECO 4, and would be expected to have lower environmental and socio-economic effects.

An overview of the capital and lifetime cost impacts of each option is set out in Table 7.3 and Table 7.4. These may be summarised as follows:

- ECO 1: capital cost of £734.2m and lifetime circuit cost of £704m;
- ECO 2: capital cost of £740.6m and lifetime circuit cost of £621m;
- ECO 3: capital cost of £1,960.3m and lifetime circuit cost of £1,863m;
- ECO 4: capital cost of £2,168.6m and lifetime circuit cost of £1,656m;
- ECSS 1: capital cost of £7,339.8m and lifetime circuit cost of £7,502m;
- ECO 5: capital cost of £1,493.5m and lifetime circuit cost of £1,159m;
- ECO 6: capital cost of £2,111.3m and lifetime circuit cost of £1,159m; and
- ECSS 2: capital cost of £8,043.4m and lifetime circuit cost of £8,568m.

NGET therefore proposes to take forward the following options:

- To resolve Issue (a) - ECO 1 a new primarily overhead line connection between new Creyke Beck substation to new High Marnham substation which has a high-level assessment capital cost of £734.2m and lifetime circuit cost of £704m. This has been assigned the project title of “North Humber to High Marnham”.

- To resolve Issue (b) – ECO 6 a new primarily overhead line connection between new Grimsby West substation to new Walpole B via Lincolnshire Connection substation(s) and new Weston Marsh substation(s) which has a high-level assessment capital cost of £2,111.3m and lifetime circuit cost of £1,159m. This has been assigned the project title of “Grimsby to Walpole”.

Next Steps

Following completion of the Assessment and Land Rights phase, the North Humber to High Marnham project moved into the Application, Examination and Decision phase of the project development and delivery process.

Meanwhile, the Grimsby to Walpole project moved from the Defined Proposal and Statutory Consultation phase into the Assessment and Land Rights phase of the project development and delivery process.

More detailed analysis for EGL 3, EGL 4 has been carried out separately for those projects. For further details, please visit the project website[3].

[3] Eastern Green Link 3 & 4 project website
https://www.nationalgrid.com/the-great-grid-upgrade/eastern-green-link-3-and-4

1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose of the Strategic Options Report

1.1.1 This Strategic Options Report Update (SOR Update) has been prepared by National Grid Electricity Transmission plc (NGET) as part of the ongoing strategic options assessment and decision-making process involved in promoting new transmission projects. It presents the findings of our options appraisal process and is intended to provide a clear justification and evidence for our decision-making of a preferred strategic options for the North Humber to High Marnham and Grimsby to Walpole projects (the Projects). This report has been prepared in accordance with Our Approach to Consenting[4].

1.1.2 The way electricity is generated in the UK is changing rapidly, with a transition to cheaper, cleaner, and more secure forms of energy like new offshore windfarms. We need to make changes to the network of overhead lines, pylons, cables, and other infrastructure that transports electricity around the country, so that everyone has access to the clean electricity from these new renewable sources. Since publication of the SOR in May 2023, the current Government has seen a significant change in emphasis around upgrades to the electricity network and therefore has committed to achieving fully decarbonised electricity by 2030 (see Section 3.3), subject to security of supply. Details on the need for the Projects is described in Chapter 4 of this report.

1.1.3 The consideration of strategic options is part of a process to inform the selection of the preferred option for each of the projects that will be included in our application for a Development Consent Order (DCO). That process will be influenced by considerations of other emerging energy projects and by evolving customer requirements.

1.1.4 As we continue to develop our plans and our proposals evolve, we keep strategic options under review, taking account of consultation feedback and any changes that might influence the assessment of technical, environmental, socio-economic, and cost considerations.

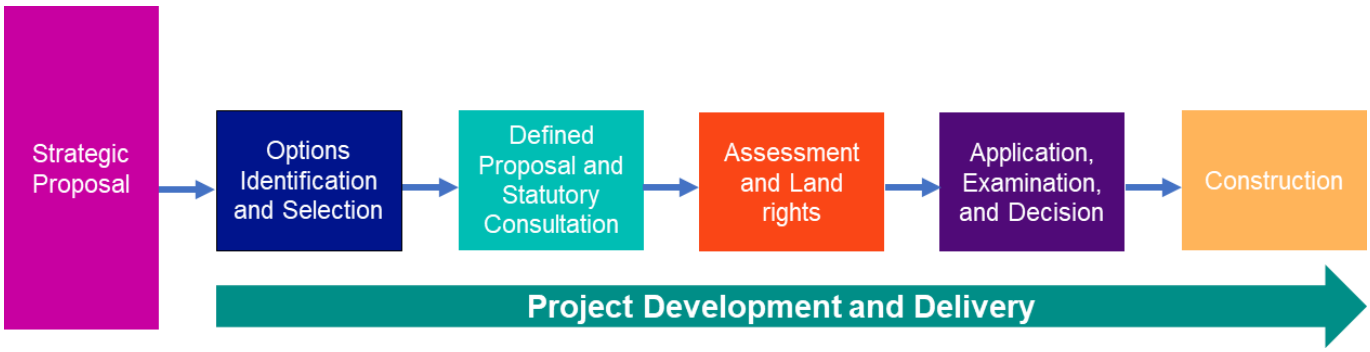
1.1.5 As set out in Our Approach to Consenting, the key stages in our project development and delivery process for major infrastructure projects are:

- Strategic Proposal;
- Options Identification and Selection;
- Defined Proposal and Statutory Consultation;
- Assessment and Land Rights;
- Application, Examination and Decision; and
- Construction.

[4] Our Approach to Consenting, National Grid Electricity Transmission, April 2022 https://www.nationalgrid.com/electricity-transmission/document/142336/download

1.1.6 The identification of a strategic proposal establishes the scope of the project which commences with Options Identification and Selection. This document, the "North Humber to High Marnham and Grimsby to Walpole – Strategic Options Report Update" forms part of the 'Application, Examination and Decision' stage of the process as shown in Figure 1.1.

Figure 1.1 – Approach to the consenting process



1.2 Structure of this Report

1.2.1 The report is structured as follows:

- Chapter 2: How is the electricity transmission system planned and operated?
- Chapter 3: The legislative, policy and regulatory framework
- Chapter 4: The need case for reinforcement to the transmission system in the North, Midlands and East Coast (Lincolnshire and Yorkshire)
- Chapter 5: Options identification and selection process
- Chapter 6: The results of our appraisal of strategic options
- Chapter 7: Comparison of the appraisal of the strategic options
- Chapter 8: Interaction with other projects
- Chapter 9: Conclusions and next steps

1.2.2 This document is also supported by a set of appendices setting out our obligations, technology assumptions and cost appraisal methodology as follows:

- Appendix A: Summary of National Grid Electricity Transmission Legal Obligations
- Appendix B: Requirement for Development Consent Order
- Appendix C: Technology Overview
- Appendix D: Economic Appraisal
- Appendix E: Mathematical Principles used for AC Loss Calculation
- Appendix F: Glossary of Terms and Acronyms
- Appendix G: Strategic Study Area Options Overview: Environmental and Socio-economic Appraisal
- Appendix H: Beyond 2030 Publication

1.2.3 This SOR is part of an iterative process, investigating prospective opportunities. While there may be some alterations as the projects to which it relates evolve, these will be supplemented by feedback from consultation exercises, along with other elements such as design evolution.

1.2.4 Consistent with Our Approach to Consenting, we will continue to assess relevant technical, environmental, socio-economic and cost factors as part of ongoing appraisals.

2. How is the electricity transmission system planned and operated?

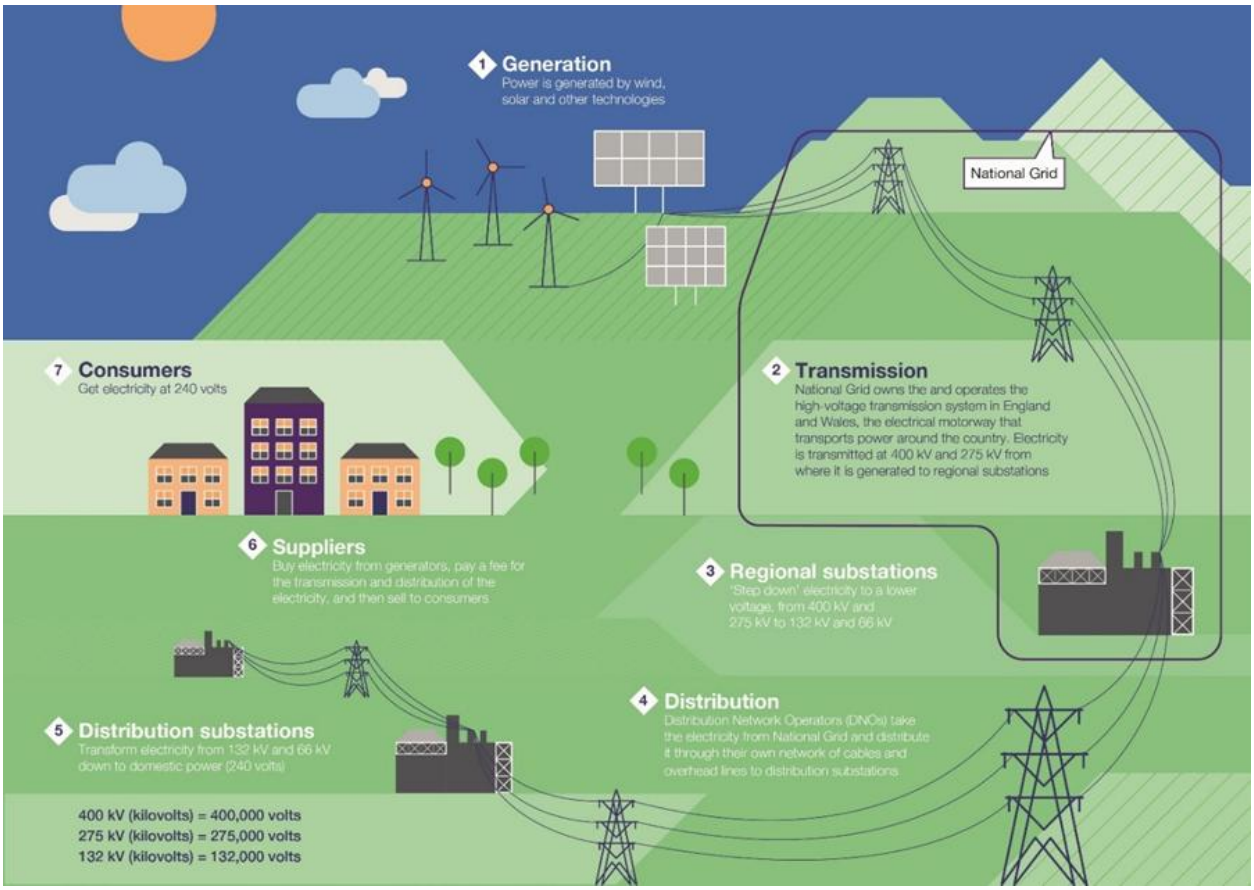
2.1 The transmission system

2.1.1 The electricity transmission system is a means of transmitting electricity around the country from where it is generated to where it is needed.

> What is demand?
>
> Demand is electricity used by domestic and non-domestic consumers, for example the electricity used within the home or by businesses.

2.1.2 The existing transmission system in Great Britain operates at 400 kV and 275 kV and transports bulk supplies of electricity from generating stations to demand centres. Lower voltage distribution systems operate at 132 kV and below in England and Wales and are mainly used to transport electricity from substations (interface points with the transmission system) to the majority of end customers as presented in Figure 2.1 below.

Figure 2.1 – The electricity system from generator to consumer



2.1.3 There are three Transmission Owners (TOs) for the Great Britain network. NGET is the TO for the transmission network in England and Wales. SP Energy Networks is the TO for Southern Scotland and SSEN is the TO for Northern Scotland and Scottish Islands Groups.

2.1.4 The generation directly connected to the electricity transmission system tends to be of two types: low carbon energy (nuclear, wind farms, solar (PV array), hydro) and large fossil fuel powered generation. This is also supplemented by new storage technologies such as battery storage.

2.1.5 Substations provide points of connection to the transmission system for power generation stations, distribution networks, transmission connected demand customers (e.g., large industrial customers) and interconnectors. Circuits connect substations on the transmission system. The system is mostly composed of double-circuits (in the case of overhead lines carried on two sides of a single pylon) and single-circuits.

What are interconnectors?

Interconnectors are transmission links that connect the electricity networks in two countries to allow for the transfer of electricity across borders. Currently the Great Britain system has interconnectors with France, Netherlands, Belgium and other countries.

2.1.6 Much of the transmission system was originally constructed in the 1960s. Incremental changes to the transmission system have subsequently been made to meet increasing customer demand and to connect new power generation stations and interconnectors with other countries' transmission systems.

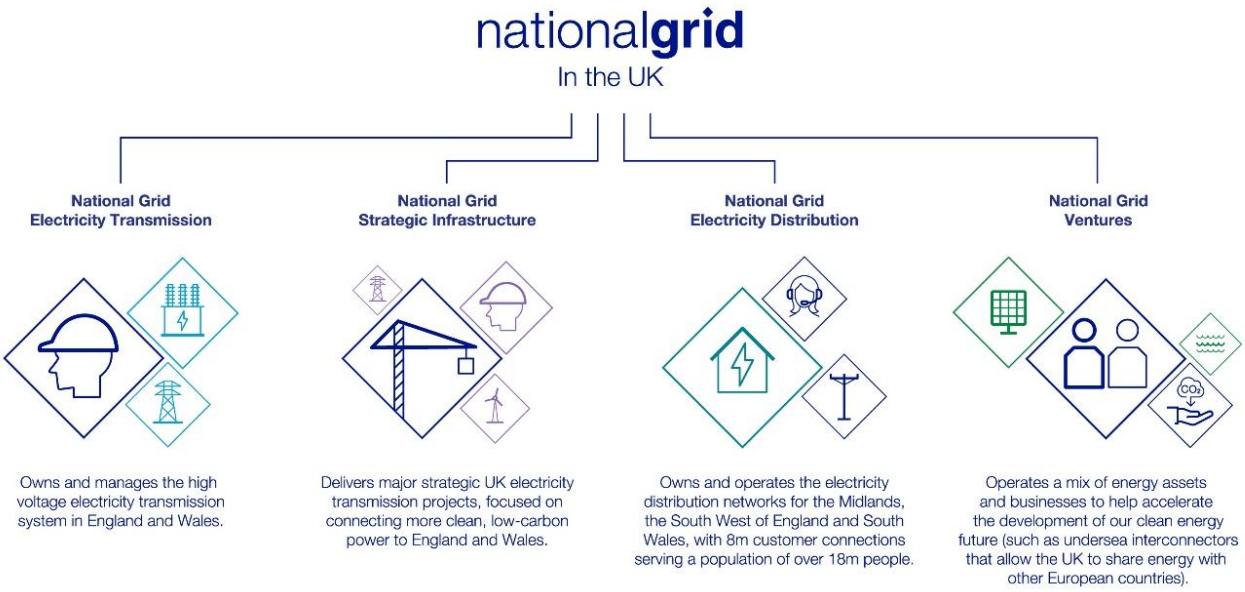
2.1.7 A single electricity market serves the whole of Great Britain. In this competitive wholesale market, generators and suppliers trade electricity on a half hourly basis. Generators produce electricity and sell it on the wholesale market. Suppliers purchase electricity on the wholesale market and supply to end customers.

2.1.8 Electricity can also be traded on the single market in Great Britain by generators and suppliers in other European countries. Interconnectors with transmission systems in France, Belgium, Denmark, the Netherlands and other countries are used to import electricity to and/or export electricity from Great Britain's transmission system.

2.2 Roles and responsibilities

2.2.1 In maintaining and operating the electricity transmission system, there are multiple parties involved. The following sections provide an overview of the roles and responsibilities for the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ), the Office of Gas and Electricity Markets (Ofgem), NGET and National Energy System Operator (NESO).

Figure 2.2 – Roles and Responsibilities within National Grid



2.3 The role of National Grid Electricity Transmission

2.3.1 NGET, as the TO, owns, builds and maintains the high voltage transmission system in England and Wales and is part of the National Grid Group of companies.

2.3.2 Our transmission system consists of approximately 7,200 km of overhead lines and 700 km of underground cabling, operating at 400 kV and 275 kV. In general, 400 kV circuits have a higher power carrying capability than 275 kV circuits. These overhead line and underground cable circuits connect around 340 transmission substations forming a highly interconnected transmission system.

2.3.3 Transmission of electricity in Great Britain requires permission by a licence granted under Section 6(1)(b) of the Electricity Act 1989[5] (as amended) (the Electricity Act). NGET has been granted a transmission licence[6] (the Transmission Licence) and is therefore bound by legal obligations, which are primarily set out in the Electricity Act and the Transmission Licence.

2.3.4 Our legal obligations include duties under Section 9, Section 38 and Schedule 9 of the Electricity Act. In summary, these require us to:

- Develop and maintain an efficient, co-ordinated, and economical system of electricity transmission. This requires us to invest in upgrading the electricity transmission system, delivering new infrastructure such as overhead lines and substations that will connect increasing amounts of low carbon power as required to meet future demand and supply as well as wider Energy Policy. This includes working with NESO to help large energy projects connect to the transmission system so their electricity can flow through the network and power homes and businesses.

[5] Electricity Act 1989
https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1989/29/contents

[6] Licenses and license conditions, Ofgem
https://www.ofgem.gov.uk/energy-policy-and-regulation/industry-licensing/licences-and-licence-conditions

- When formulating proposals for the installation of electric line or the execution of any other works for or in connection with the transmission or supply of electricity, have regard to the desirability of preserving natural beauty, of conserving flora, fauna and geological or physiographical features of special interest and of protecting sites, buildings and objects of architectural, historic or archaeological interest.
- When formulating such proposals, do what it reasonably can to mitigate any effect which the proposals would have on the natural beauty of the countryside or on any such flora, fauna, features, sites, buildings or objects.

2.4 The role of the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero

2.4.1 The Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ) is the ministerial department with primary responsibility for energy. It sets the policy landscape for the United Kingdom. Details of Government energy policy are described in Chapter 3.

2.4.2 The Secretary of State for DESNZ is the ultimate decision maker for new electricity transmission network proposals under the Planning Act 2008[7] (as amended).

What is net zero?

UK Government's commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to net zero by 2050 as per the Climate Change Act 2008 (2050 Target Amendment) Order 2019. Net zero means any emissions that cannot be avoided would be balanced by schemes to offset an equivalent amount of greenhouse gases from the atmosphere.

2.5 The role of the Office of Gas and Electricity Markets

2.5.1 Ofgem (the Office of Gas and Electricity Markets) is the regulator for gas and electricity markets in Great Britain. It is a non-ministerial Government department and an independent National Regulatory Authority, whose role is to protect consumers as a greener, fairer, energy system is delivered.

2.5.2 Ofgem works with Government, industry, and consumer groups to help deliver net zero from an energy perspective at the lowest cost possible to consumers. For NGET, this means reviewing the need case and the associated investment required to deliver large infrastructure projects.

2.5.3 Ofgem provides regulatory approval and funding for transmission investment through the RIIO-3 (Revenue = Incentives + Innovation + Outputs) framework[8], informed by evolving strategic planning processes including the Network Options Assessment (NOA), Holistic Network Design (HND)[9] and transitional Centralised Strategic

[7] Planning Act 2008
https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2008/29/contents

[8] RIIO-3 Regulatory Framework:

https://www.ofgem.gov.uk/decision/riio-3-final-determinations-electricity-transmission-gas-distribution-and-gas-transmission-sectors

[9] Holistic Network Design (NESO)
https://www.neso.energy/publications/beyond-2030/holistic-network-design-offshore-wind

Network Plan (tCSNP), and moving towards the enduring Centralised Strategic Network Plan (CSNP).

2.5.4 Through a combination of baseline allowances, uncertainty mechanisms, and targeted frameworks such as Accelerated Strategic Transmission Investment (ASTI), Ofgem enables the timely and efficient delivery of strategically important projects, supporting Government decarbonisation objectives while protecting consumers.

2.6 The role of the National Energy System Operator

2.6.1 The National Energy System Operator (NESO) is the electricity system operator for Great Britain. NESO ensures electricity is always where it is needed, and the transmission network remains stable and secure in its operation.

2.6.2 As of 1 October 2024, NESO became a public body owned by the DESNZ. It was formerly part of National Grid PLC and called the Electricity System Operator (ESO).

2.6.3 NESO has been established to act as the independent organisation responsible for planning Great Britain's energy system, looking after and operating the electricity and gas networks while also offering expert advice to the sector's decision-makers.

2.6.4 Generators apply to NESO when they wish to connect to the network and NESO leads, working with the TOs, to consider how the network may need to evolve to deliver a cleaner, greener future. NESO is currently reforming its connection processes to meet the increasing number of projects wanting to connect to the transmission system.

2.6.5 NESO, in undertaking this role, engages with NGET for England and Wales as well as the two TOs in Scotland, SSEN and SP Energy Networks.

2.6.6 NESO and its predecessor ESO have been or – in the case of NESO - are responsible for multiple roles across the electricity system, including:

- Electricity market balancing: NESO ensures that electricity demand and supply is balanced on a second-by-second basis and manages any shortfalls in boundary capacity by reducing power flows and constraining generation.

What is a boundary?

A boundary notionally splits the system into two parts, crossing critical circuit paths that carry power between the areas where power flow limitations may be encountered. NESO can manage any shortfall in boundary capacity by reducing the power flows. This is achieved by constraining generation and paying for generators to reduce output.

What is constraining generation?

Generation is constrained when the electricity network cannot physically transfer power from one region to another. In these circumstances, NESO, in its system operator role, will ask generators to change their output to maintain system stability. Generators then receive constraint payments to compensate them for the reduction in their demand.

- Future Energy Scenarios: NESO is responsible for an annual process to publish the Future Energy Scenarios (FES)[10] which takes energy industry views as part of a consultation process and develops a set of possible energy growth scenarios to 2050. In developing FES, NESO takes into consideration the latest pipeline of connections as detailed within the Transmission Entry Capacity (TEC) Register.
- Network planning: ESO also facilitated an annual process to publish the Electricity Ten-Year Statement (ETYS) setting out the network performance and requirements for all transmission in Great Britain over the next 10 years based on the data from the FES. ESO used the ETYS to publish annually the Network Options Assessment (NOA)[11], which considered the economic case for options to reinforce the transmission system and made economic recommendations. The NOA included a Cost Benefit Analysis (CBA) process to determine when it would be appropriate to take forward options proposed by TOs to increase network capacity. The CBA considered the capital costs of the proposal, delivery timescales and constraint costs (as explained in Chapter 5) avoided by delivering the proposal. The NOA was used to establish when a proposed reinforcement became the most economical way to deliver value to Great Britain's energy consumers.
- Network Planning Review (NPR): The Pathway to 2030 Holistic Network Design (HND) and the recommendations set out in the most recent Network Options Assessment (NOA) prepared by ESO were the first steps towards a more centralised, strategic network planning approach that is critical for delivering affordable, clean and secure power, with a view to achieving net zero.
- NESO is currently transitioning from the NOA to a more comprehensive approach, a Centralised Strategic Network Plan[12] (CSNP). The CSNP will aim to foster the holistic development of the NETS, marking a new era in our network planning.
- Connections: NESO facilitates several roles on behalf of the electricity industry, including making formal offers to connection applicants to the electricity transmission system. NGET is obligated to provide the physical connections to the elements of the electricity transmission system that NGET own.

2.6.7 The planning activities undertaken by NESO are currently being updated to support the delivery of the Government's net-zero commitment. In 2022, ESO published the HND setting out a single integrated transmission network design that supports the large-scale delivery of electricity generated from offshore wind by 2030.

2.6.8 As it stands, the HND recommendations are not sufficient by themselves to reinforce the transmission system, as more electricity will be generated than the network can efficiently support and transport. Therefore, the UK Government requested ESO to further develop the HND and enable a set of recommendations to allow a greater amount of offshore wind generation to connect to the network.

2.6.9 The further development of the HND, known as HND FUE (HND Follow Up Exercise), was published by ESO in 2024, in a report titled 'Beyond 2030'. More detail is provided in Appendix H.

[10] Future Energy Scenarios: NESO Pathways to Net Zero
https://www.neso.energy/publications/future-energy-scenarios-fes
[11] Network Options Assessment 2021/22 Refresh, National Grid ESO, July 2022
https://www.neso.energy/document/262981/download
[12] Decision on the first findings of our Electricity Transmission Network Planning Review, Ofgem
https://www.ofgem.gov.uk/publications/decision-initial-findings-our-electricity-transmission-network-planning-review

3. The legislative, policy and regulatory framework

3.1 Overview

3.1.1 We are under a legal duty to maintain an efficient, economic, and co-ordinated energy transmission system. This chapter of the report provides further detail of the legal duties and the wider policy context to which we operate within including Government energy policy and national planning policy. This includes ensuring that the delivery of energy is affordable, our networks are resilient, and enable transition to a net zero carbon economy having regard to the environment and society that we operate in.

3.2 Why is NGET required to reinforce the transmission system?

3.2.1 Our duties are placed upon us by the Electricity Act 1989 ('the Electricity Act') and under the terms of our Transmission Licence. Those duties, and terms of particular relevance to the development of the proposed connection described in this report are set out below.

3.2.2 As part of our Transmission Licence requirements, the transmission infrastructure needs to be capable of providing and maintaining a minimum level of security and quality of supply and of transporting electricity from and to customers. We are required to ensure that the transmission system remains capable as customer requirements change.

3.2.3 The capacity of the transmission system is based on the physical ability of electrical circuits to carry power. Each circuit has a defined capacity and the total capacity of the circuits in a region or across a boundary is the sum of all the capacity of all the circuits.

3.2.4 The capability of the transmission system is the natural flow of energy that can occur in the infrastructure comprising the network. Due to the physical properties of the transmission system, this is often not as great as the theoretical capacity of the infrastructure in question.

3.2.5 The transmission system needs to cater for demand, generation and interconnector changes. These customers can apply to the National Energy System Operator (NESO) for new or modified connections to the transmission system. The relevant transmission owner must then assess the generation group to ensure that the transmission system is sufficient in the area to accommodate the existing and proposed generation. Upon completion of the assessment, NESO will make a formal offer of connection.

3.2.6 Where power flows are constrained by the transmission system across a specific number of circuits, this is termed a 'boundary' by NESO. Such boundaries are used in the Electricity Ten-Year Statement (ETYS) to identify constraints which may require changes to the transmission system in the next 10 years. Where the 'boundary capacity' is exceeded against the standards of the Security and Quality of Supply Standard (SQSS), we must resolve the capacity shortfall.

What is the SQSS?

It is an industry standard that sets out the criteria and methodology for planning and operating the onshore and offshore electricity transmission system. It details the planning criteria for the connection of generation and demand groups onto the transmission system. It defines the performance required of the transmission system in terms of Quality and Security of Supply for secured events. This means that at all times:

- electricity system frequency should be maintained within statutory limits;
- no part of the National Electricity Transmission System (NETS) should be overloaded beyond its capability;
- voltage performance should be within acceptable statutory limits; and
- the system should remain electrically stable.

NESO is the code administrator of the SQSS and there is a panel made up of industry experts that are responsible for ensuring that the SQSS is up to date and manages any changes. Any changes to the SQSS are overseen by Ofgem.

3.2.7 Where capacity and capability of the transmission system are not sufficient, either from a generation group or across a boundary, we are required to reinforce the network. We do this by either modifying the existing network (if possible) and / or constructing additional transmission infrastructure to resolve the shortfall.

3.3 Our Statutory Duties

3.3.1 This section details the statutory duties most relevant to the development of new infrastructure. These duties are considered in NGET's approach to identifying options and the selection process. This is shown in NGET's review of potential strategic options and the application of the appraisal factors, as reported in Chapter 5 of this report.

Electricity Act 1989

3.3.2 When developing new infrastructure, NGET is required to comply with the following duties.

3.3.3 Section 9(2) of the Electricity Act (General duties of licence holders) states:

"it shall be the duty of the holder of a licence authorising him to participate in the transmission of electricity: (a) to develop and maintain an efficient, co-ordinated and economical system of electricity transmission…;"

3.3.4 Section 38 and Schedule 9 of the Electricity Act state that:

"(1) In formulating any relevant proposals, a licence holder…

- (a) shall have regard to the desirability of preserving natural beauty, of conserving flora, fauna and geological or physiographical features of special interest and of protecting sites, buildings and objects of architectural, historic or archaeological interest; and

- (b) shall do what he reasonably can to mitigate any effect which the proposals would have on the natural beauty of the countryside or on any such flora, fauna, features, sites, buildings or objects."

National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949

3.3.5 Section 11A (1A) of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 imposes a duty on certain bodies and persons in respect of National Parks. National Grid, for the purpose of this provision, is a 'relevant authority' by virtue of being a 'statutory undertaker' such that the duty applies to it. The duty provides as follows:

"(1A) In exercising or performing any functions in relation to, or so as to affect, land in any National Park in England, a relevant authority other than a devolved Welsh authority must seek to further the purposes specified in section 5(1) and if it appears that there is a conflict between those purposes, must attach greater weight to the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the area comprised in the National Park."

3.3.6 Section 5 sets out the statutory purposes of the National Park, as follows:

"(1) The provisions of this Part of this Act shall have effect for the purpose—

(a) of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the areas specified in the next following subsection; and

(b) of promoting opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of those areas by the public."

Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000

3.3.7 Section 85 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 imposes a duty on public bodies in respect of areas of outstanding natural beauty. National Grid, for the purpose of this provision, is a 'relevant authority' by virtue of being a 'statutory undertaker', such that the duty applies to it. The duty provides as follows:

"(A1) 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."

Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006

3.3.8 Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 imposes a duty to conserve and enhance biodiversity. National Grid, for the purposes of this provision, is a 'public authority' by virtue of being a 'statutory undertaker' such that this duty applies to it. The duty provides as follows:

"(A1) For the purposes of this section "the general biodiversity objective" is the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity in England through the exercise of functions in relation to England.

(1) A public authority which has any functions exercisable in relation to England must from time to time consider what action the authority can properly take, consistently with the proper exercise of its functions, to further the general biodiversity objective."

Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981

3.3.9 Section 28G of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 imposes a duty on 'statutory undertakers' in respect of sites of special scientific interest. The duty provides as follows:

"(1) An authority to which this section applies (referred to in this section and in sections 28H and 28I as "a section 28G authority") shall have the duty set out in subsection (2) in exercising its functions so far as their exercise is likely to affect the flora, fauna or geological or physiographical features by reason of which a site of special scientific interest is of special interest.

(2) The duty is to take reasonable steps, consistent with the proper exercise of the authority's functions, to further the conservation and enhancement of the flora, fauna or geological or physiographical features by reason of which the site is of special scientific interest."

Government energy policy

3.3.10 In 2019, the previous UK Government committed to achieving net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. In July 2024 a General Election was held, which led to a change in UK Government, although the 2050 target for net zero greenhouse emissions remains in place. In addition, the current UK Government has committed to achieving a net zero electricity system by 2030.

3.3.11 These commitments require the UK to move away from fossil fuels and to adopt alternative sources of energy to power our homes, transport and businesses. The Government has set out how it plans to deliver on these commitments within multiple plans including:

- November 2020: Prime Minister's Ten-Point Plan for a Green Industrial Revolution[13].
- December 2020: Energy White Paper: Powering our Net Zero Future[14].
- October 2021: Net Zero Strategy: Build Back Greener[15].
- April 2022: British Energy Security Strategy[16] (BESS). This document is built on the Net Zero Strategy and was published in response to the Russian invasion of Ukraine and the 2022 energy price crisis.

[13] The Ten-Point Plan for a Green Industrial Revolution, HM Government, November 2020 https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5fb5513de90e0720978b1a6f/10_POINT_PLAN_BOOKLET.pdf

[14] Energy White Paper: Powering our Net Zero Future, HM Government, December 2020 https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5fdc61e2d3bf7f3a3bdc8cbf/201216_BEIS_EWP_Command_Paper_Accessible.pdf

[15] Net Zero Strategy: Build Back Greener, HM Government, October 2021 https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6194dfa4d3bf7f0555071b1b/net-zero-strategy-beis.pdf

[16] British Energy Security Strategy, HM Government, April 2022 https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/626112c0e90e07168e3fdba3/british-energy-security-strategy-web-accessible.pdf

- March 2023: Powering Up Britain[17] and Powering Up Britain: Energy Security Plan[18]. This document provides an update of the strategy for secure, clean and affordable British energy for the long-term future.
- December 2024: Clean Power 2030 Action Plan: A new era of clean electricity[19]. This document provides the strategic initiative aimed at transitioning to cleaner energy sources and reducing carbon emissions.

3.3.12 Key ambitions made within these plans to achieve net zero include:

- Up to 50GW of offshore wind connected by 2030 including 5GW of which will be offshore floating wind.
- Up to eight Reactors of Nuclear energy being progressed reaching up to 24GW to be achieved by 2050.
- Up to 10GW of low carbon hydrogen production capacity by 2030, doubling the previous ambition.
- 600,000 heat pump installations a year by 2028 and improving housing stock insulation.

3.3.13 Key commitments that were made by the UK Government in the Powering Up Britain Strategy with regards to electricity network development include those listed below:

- For the appointed Electricity Networks Commissioner to provide recommendations to Government in June 2023 on how grid delivery can be accelerated.
- To work with industry and Ofgem to reform the grid connections process, including publishing a connections action plan in 2023.
- Undertake a Review of the Electricity Market Arrangements (REMA) and consult in Autumn 2023 on the reforms required to bring forward low carbon generation.
- To publish five revised energy National Policy Statements (NPS) covering Renewables, Oil and Gas Pipelines, Electricity Networks and Gas Generation, and an overarching Energy Statement for consultation. The revised NPS will include a requirement for offshore wind to be considered as “critical national infrastructure”.

[17] Powering up Britain, HM Government, March 2023 https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/642468ff2fa8480013ec0f39/powering-up-britain-joint-overview.pdf

[18] Powering up Britain: Energy Security Plan, HM Government, March 2023 https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/642708eafbe620000f17daa2/powering-up-britain-energy-security-plan.pdf

[19] Clean Power 2030 Action Plan: A new era of clean electricity, UK Government, December 2024 https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/677bc80399c93b7286a396d6/clean-power-2030-action-plan-main-report.pdf

3.4 Consenting regimes and national planning policy

Electricity network infrastructure developments

3.4.1 Developing the electricity transmission system in England and Wales subject to the type and scale of the project, may require one or more statutory consents which may include:

- planning permission under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990;
- a marine licence under the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009;
- a Development Consent Order ("DCO") under the Planning Act 2008, and/or
- a variety of consents under related legislation.

3.4.2 The Planning Act 2008 defines developments of new electricity overhead lines of 132kV and above as nationally significant infrastructure projects ('NSIPs') requiring a DCO. Such an order may also incorporate consent for other types of work that are associated with new overhead line infrastructure development, and these may be incorporated as part of a DCO that is granted. Applications for a DCO have to be determined in accordance with National Policy Statements ("NPS") in most cases.

3.4.3 Five NPSs for energy infrastructure were designated by the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change in November 2023 and confirmed by Parliament in January 2024. The relevant NPSs for electricity transmission infrastructure developments are the Overarching National Policy Statement for Energy (EN-1) and the National Policy Statement for Electricity Networks Infrastructure (EN-5), which is read in conjunction with EN-1. Further updates to the NPSs came into force on 6 January 2026, and this report has been updated where relevant to reflect those changes. The current National Policy Statement for Nuclear Energy Generation (EN-7), designated in December 2025, provides the framework for assessing development consent applications for new nuclear power stations and supersedes EN-6 for future projects, which applied to stations deployable by the end of 2025.

3.4.4 Section 104(3) of the Planning Act 2008 states that the decision maker must determine an application for a DCO in accordance with any relevant NPS, except in certain specified circumstances (such as where the adverse impact of the proposed development would outweigh its benefits). The energy NPSs therefore provide the primary policy basis for decisions on DCO applications for electricity transmission projects. The NPSs may also be a material consideration for decisions on other types of development consent in England and Wales (including offshore wind generation projects) and for planning applications under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, for which the National Planning Policy Framework 2024 (NPPF) would be the relevant national planning policy document. The NPPF sets out the government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied.

Demonstrating the need for a project

3.4.5 Part 3 of EN-1 sets out Government policy on the need for new nationally significant energy infrastructure projects. Paragraphs 3.2.1 and 3.2.2 confirm that the UK needs a range of the types of energy infrastructure covered by the NPS to ensure the supply of energy always remains secure, reliable, affordable, and consistent with achieving net zero emissions in 2050 for a wide range of future scenarios. Paragraph

3.2.9 states that "substantial weight" should be given to the urgent need for the types of infrastructure covered by the NPS when considering applications for DCOs.

3.4.6 Description of the need for:

- new electricity transmission infrastructure is set out in EN-1, EN-3 and EN-5
- new offshore/onshore wind generation is set out in EN-1 and EN-3, and
- new nuclear generation is set out in EN-1 and EN-7 (EN-6 was superseded by EN-7 in December 2025).

3.4.7 The need for new transmission infrastructure for the Projects is described in Chapter 4 of the SOR.

Assessment principles applied by decision maker

3.4.8 Part 4 of EN-1 sets out the general policies that are applied in determining DCO applications relating to new energy infrastructure. Part 2 of EN-5 sets out the assessment principles in the specific context of electricity networks infrastructure.

3.4.9 There are a number of key principles of particular importance for transmission infrastructure projects.

Presumption in favour of development

3.4.10 Section 4.1 of EN-1 confirms that the Secretary of State will start with a presumption in favour of granting consent for energy NSIPs. This presumption applies unless any more specific and relevant policies set out in the relevant NPS clearly indicate that consent should be refused. The presumption is also subject to the exceptions set out in Section 1.1.4 of EN-1. In assessing any application, in particular when weighing its adverse impacts against its benefits, the Secretary of State should take account of potential:

- benefits (e.g. the contribution to meeting the need for energy infrastructure, job creation, reduction of geographical disparities, environmental enhancements, and long term or wider benefits), and
- adverse impacts (including on the environment, and including any long-term and cumulative adverse impacts, as well as any measures to avoid, reduce, mitigate or compensate for any adverse impacts, following the mitigation hierarchy).

The critical national priority for low carbon infrastructure

3.4.11 Section 4.2 of EN-1 states that there is a critical national priority (CNP) for the provision of nationally significant low carbon infrastructure. EN-1 confirms that the CNP extends to all power lines in scope of EN-5 (including network reinforcement and upgrade works, and associated infrastructure such as substations), CNP is not limited to infrastructure associated specifically with a particular generation technology.

3.4.12 Paragraphs 4.2.28 to 4.2.30 explain that the CNP policy is relevant during Secretary of State decision making in reference to any residual impacts. Where the required assessment has been provided by an applicant, the CNP policy applies a starting assumption that CNP Infrastructure will meet tests such as:

- where development within a Green Belt requires very special circumstances to justify development,
- where development within or outside a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) requires the benefits (including need) of the development in the location proposed to clearly outweigh both the likely impact on features of the site that make it a SSSI, and any broader impacts on the national network of SSSIs,
- where development in nationally designated landscapes requires exceptional circumstances to be demonstrated, and
- where substantial harm to or loss of significance to heritage assets should be exceptional or wholly exceptional.

3.4.13 Paragraphs 4.2.31 to 4.2.35 set out the approach to be taken to CNP Infrastructure in the context of a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) or a Marine Conservation Zone Assessment (MCZA):

- Any HRA or MCZA residual impacts will continue to be considered under existing frameworks.
- Where, following Appropriate Assessment or MCZA, CNP Infrastructure has residual adverse impacts on the integrity of sites forming part of the UK national site network, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects, or which significantly risk hindering the achievement of the stated conservation objectives for the MCZ (as relevant) the Secretary of State will consider making a derogation.
- In that consideration, the Secretary of State will start from the position that energy security and decarbonising the power sector to combat climate change:
  - requires a significant number of deliverable locations for CNP Infrastructure and for each location to maximise its capacity, with the fact that there are other potential plans or projects deliverable in different locations to meet the need for CNP Infrastructure being unlikely to be treated as an alternative solution and the existence of another way of developing the proposed plan or project which results in a significantly lower generation capacity being unlikely to meet the objectives and therefore be treated as an alternative solution, and
  - are capable of amounting to imperative reasons of overriding public interest (IROPI) for HRAs, and, for MCZ assessments, the benefit to the public is capable of outweighing the risk of environmental damage, for CNP Infrastructure.
- For HRAs, where an applicant has shown there are no deliverable alternative solutions, and that there are IROPI, compensatory measures must be secured as part of a derogation.
- For MCZs, where an applicant has shown there are no other means of proceeding which would create a substantially lower risk, and the benefit to the public outweighs the risk of damage to the environment, the Secretary of State must be satisfied that measures of equivalent environmental benefit will be undertaken.

3.4.14 EN-1 requires applicants to clearly demonstrate how the mitigation hierarchy has been applied, including seeking advice from the appropriate Statutory Nature Conservation Bodies in agreeing the approach.

Consideration of alternatives

3.4.15 Section 4.3 of EN-1 states that, from a planning policy perspective alone, there is no general requirement to consider alternatives or to establish whether the proposed project represents the best option. However, in relation to electricity transmission projects, paragraph 2.9.14 of EN-5 states:

"Where the nature or proposed route of an overhead line will likely result in particularly significant landscape and visual impacts, as would be assessed through seascape, landscape and visual impact assessment (SLVIA), the applicant should demonstrate that they have given due consideration to the costs and benefits of feasible alternatives to the overhead line. This could include, where appropriate re-routing, underground or subsea cables and the feasibility e.g. in cost, engineering or environmental terms of these..."

3.4.16 Section 4.3 of EN-1 also makes clear that there will be circumstances where an applicant is specifically required to include information in their application about the main alternatives that were considered. These circumstances may include requirements in relation to compulsory acquisition and habitats sites.

Good design

3.4.17 Section 4.7 of EN-1 stresses the importance of 'good design' for energy infrastructure, explaining that this goes beyond aesthetic considerations as fitness for purpose and sustainability are equally important. It is acknowledged in EN-1 that the nature of much energy infrastructure development will often limit the extent to which it can contribute to the enhancement of the quality of the area.

3.4.18 Section 2.4 of EN-5 highlights that the Secretary of State should bear in mind that electricity networks infrastructure must in the first instance be safe and secure, and that the functional design constraints of safety and security may limit an applicant's ability to influence the aesthetic appearance of that infrastructure.

Climate change adaptation and resilience

3.4.19 Section 4.10 of EN-1 explains how climate change adaptation and resilience should be taken into account, requiring the assessment of the impacts on and from the proposed energy project across a range of climate change scenarios. Section 2.3 of EN-5 expands on this in the specific context of electricity networks infrastructure. This states that DCO applications are required to set out the vulnerabilities / resilience of the proposals to flooding, effects of wind and storms on overhead lines, higher average temperatures leading to increased transmission losses, earth movement or subsidence caused by flooding or drought (for underground cables) and coastal erosion (for the landfall of offshore transmission cables and their associated substations in the inshore and coastal locations respectively).

Networks DCO applications submitted in isolation

3.4.20 Section 2.7 of EN-5 confirms that it can be appropriate for DCO applications for new transmission infrastructure to be submitted separately from applications for the generation that this infrastructure will serve. Section 2.8 of EN-5 explains that, where an application is a reinforcement project in its own right and does not accompany an application for a generating station, or is not underpinned by a "contractually-supported agreement" to provide an as-yet-unconsented generating station with a

connection, the Secretary of State should have regard to the need case for new electricity networks infrastructure set out in Section 3.3 of EN-1.

Electricity Act duties

3.4.21 Paragraphs 2.8.7 and 2.8.8 of EN-5 recognise developers' duties pursuant to section 9 of the Electricity Act to bring forward efficient and economical proposals in terms of network design, as well as the duty to facilitate competition and so provide a connection whenever and wherever one is required.

Adverse impacts and potential benefits

3.4.22 Part 5 of EN-1 covers the impacts that are common across all energy NSIPs and sections 2.9-2.15 of EN-5 consider impact in the specific context of electricity networks infrastructure.

3.4.23 Those impacts identified in EN-1 include air quality and emissions, greenhouse gas emissions, biodiversity and geological conservation, civil and military aviation and defence interests, coastal change (to the extent in or proximate to a coastal area), dust, odour, artificial light, smoke, steam and insect infestation, flood risk, historic environment, landscape and visual, land use, noise and vibration, socio-economic impacts, traffic and transport, resource and waste management and water quality and resources. The extent to which these impacts are relevant to a particular stage of a project or are a relevant differentiator at a particular stage of the options appraisal process, will vary. In particular, some of these impacts are scoped out of this stage of the options appraisal process for this project.

3.4.24 EN-5 considers specific potential impacts associated with electricity networks, including the following topics: biodiversity and geological conservation, landscape and visual, noise and vibration, electric and magnetic fields and sulphur hexafluoride (SF6).

3.4.25 Landscape and Visual impacts are of particular relevance for electricity transmission infrastructure projects. Paragraph 2.9.7 of EN-5 states that the Government does not believe that development of overhead lines is incompatible in principle with the statutory duty under section 9 of the Electricity Act 1989 to have regard to visual and landscape amenity and to reasonably mitigate impacts. While paragraph 2.9.21 of EN-5 states that use of overhead lines as transmission technology should be the strong starting presumption for electricity networks developments, EN-5 recognises that in practice overhead lines can give rise to adverse landscape and visual impacts, dependent upon their type, scale, siting, degree of screening and the nature of the landscape and local environment through which they are routed. It also confirms that the presumption is reversed when crossing part of a nationally designated landscape.

3.4.26 In relation to alternative technologies for electricity transmission projects, paragraph 2.9.23 of EN-5 states in relation to developments crossing a nationally designated landscape that:

"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."

3.4.27 Similarly, paragraph 2.9.25 of EN-5 states in relation to developments that do not cross a nationally designated landscape that:

"taking account of the fact that the government has not laid down any further rule on the circumstances requiring use of underground or subsea cables, the Secretary of State must weigh the feasibility, cost, and any harm of the undergrounding or subsea option against: the adverse implications of the overhead line proposal; the cost and feasibility of re-routing overhead lines or mitigation proposals for the relevant line section; and the cost and feasibility of the reconfiguration, rationalisation, and/or use of underground or subsea cabling of proximate existing or proposed electricity networks infrastructure."

3.4.28 Paragraph 2.9.18 of EN-5 confirms that the Holford Rules, which are a set of "common sense" guidelines for routeing new overhead lines should be embodied in applicants' proposals. The Horlock Rules deal in a similar fashion with the siting of new substations and similar infrastructure. Paragraph 2.11.2 goes on to state that the Secretary of State should be satisfied that the development, so far as is reasonably possible, complies with the Holford Rules and Horlock Rules.

3.5 Security and Quality of Supply Standard

3.5.1 We must comply with Section 9 of the Electricity Act and Standard Condition D3 (Transmission system security standard and quality of service) of its Transmission Licence. This means that where the boundary capacity of the Main Interconnected Transmission System (MITS) is exceeded against the standards, NGET must resolve the capacity shortfall under the terms of its Transmission Licence. The standards against which NGET assesses these shortfalls are set out in the "Design of the Main Interconnected Transmission System" section of the NETS SQSS.

3.5.2 The NETS SQSS also sets out in "Generation Connection Criteria applicable to the onshore transmission system" that connections to the transmission system must be secured to meet the identified requirements. Where the SQSS applies, the generator(s) are considered part of a "generation group" for assessment against these criteria.

> What is a generation group?
>
> A generation group consists of a number of existing generating stations and / or proposed generating stations connecting in a particular geographical area of the transmission system.

3.5.3 Generators apply to NESO for connections to the NETS in Great Britain. If the application is for an onshore generation connection, the applicant will indicate the specific location of the generating station, which will indicate the likely geographical connection to the transmission system. If an application is made for a generation connection or impacts multiple transmission owners, NESO will co-ordinate a process involving the relevant stakeholders to determine the preferred connection solution.

3.5.4 NESO ensures the relevant onshore or offshore transmission owner undertakes generation connection process studies via the relevant process and makes a connection offer to the customer for a connection point and identifies the relevant infrastructure work needed to make the connection. Once this offer is signed the connection is recorded on the TEC Register and forms a contractually binding connection location and timescale with which the transmission owner, such as NGET, is required to connect the generation customer or undertake the works to facilitate their connection.

3.5.5 A connection offer will normally be given in respect of a particular geographical area. Sometimes this leads to a presumption as to the connection point located on the existing transmission network. In other circumstances where there is no or little existing transmission infrastructure, this will require the provision of new infrastructure. The post connection offer assessment process enables further evaluation of the preferred connection option and refinement of the preferred overall transmission solution. This process continues, informed by evolving circumstances and consultation, until an application is submitted for development consent in relation to a transmission project.

3.5.6 We assess the adequacy of the project's transmission system in accordance with the method defined in the SQSS. We are required to assess power flows between regions of the transmission system (Planned Transfers). The Planned Transfer from the region is calculated by taking the Average Cold Spell (ACS) Peak Demand in the region and generation following the modelling set out in the SQSS. The Planned Transfer is therefore the amount of power which will flow out of the region at ACS peak. Planned Transfer calculations will always consider the power flows for ACS peak demand conditions, as less generation will be entering the market when demand is lower.

3.5.7 Any transmission system is susceptible to faults that interfere with the ability of transmission circuits to carry power. Most faults are temporary, many are related to weather conditions such as lightning or severe weather, and many circuits can be restored to operation automatically in minutes after a fault. Other faults may be of longer duration and would require repair or replacement of failed electrical equipment.

3.5.8 Whilst some of these faults may be more likely than others, faults may occur at any time, and it would not be acceptable to have a significant interruption to supplies as a result of specified fault conditions, including combinations of faults. The principle underlying the SQSS is that the NETS should have sufficient spare capability or "redundancy" such that fault conditions do not result in widespread supply interruptions. The level of security of supply has been determined to ensure that the risk of supply interruptions is managed to a level that maintains a minimum standard of transmission system performance. The faults we need to design the system to be compliant with are called "Secured Events".

4. The need case for reinforcement to the transmission system

4.1 Background

4.1.1 The electricity industry in Great Britain is undergoing unprecedented change. Closure of fossil fuel burning generation and end of life nuclear power stations means significant additional investment in new sustainable generation and interconnection capacity will be needed to ensure existing minimum standards of security and supply are maintained.

4.1.2 Growth in onshore green technologies, offshore wind generation and interconnectors with Europe has seen a significant number of connections planned in Scotland, England and, significantly, in areas of the East Coast of England.

4.1.3 The Climate Change Act 2008 (as amended) now commits the UK Government by law to reducing greenhouse gas emissions by at least 100% from the 1990 baseline by 2050, strengthening the likelihood that increasing numbers of these connections will progress to delivery. This 2050 target is commonly known as ‘Net Zero’.

4.1.4 To achieve Net Zero, there will need to be a substantial shift away from the use of fossil fuel burning generation. This has led to investment in onshore green technologies and offshore wind generation, which will increase further in the future.

4.1.5 Historically, the transmission system was powered by coal-powered generating stations. The increasing importance of low carbon generation has driven the closure of these generating stations, with more expected to close in the future. This generating capacity is being replaced by low carbon generation which is mostly geographically located away from the coal powered generating stations. The transmission system must be updated to reflect the location of the new generation capacity.

4.1.6 Electricity demand is especially concentrated in large urban areas, including urban areas in the M62 corridor, the M18 corridor, the Midlands, the M4 corridor and the South East. The transmission system carries bulk energy from the generators to points on the network where that power is taken onto the distribution networks for onward transmission to homes and businesses across England and Wales. As the country decarbonises, this national demand for energy will increase and new low carbon generation will replace fossil fuel generation.

4.2 National Electricity Transmission System Security and Quality of Supply Standard

4.2.1 NGET must comply with Section 9 of the Electricity Act and Standard Condition D3 (Transmission system security standard and quality of service) of its Transmission Licence. This means that where the boundary capacity of the Main Interconnected Transmission System (MITS) is exceeded against the standards, NGET must resolve the capacity shortfall under the terms of its Transmission Licence. The standards against which NGET assesses these shortfalls are set out in the “*Design of the Main*

Interconnected Transmission System" section of the National Electricity Transmission System Security and Quality of Supply Standard (NETS SQSS).

4.2.2 The NETS SQSS also sets out in "*Generation Connection Criteria applicable to the onshore transmission system*" that connections to the transmission system must be secured to meet the identified requirements set out in the NETS SQSS. Where the NETS SQSS applies, the generator(s) are considered part of a "generation group" for assessment against these criteria.

4.2.3 Generators apply to NESO for connections to the NETS in Great Britain. If the application is for an onshore generation connection, the applicant will indicate the specific location of the generating station, which will indicate the likely geographical connection to the transmission system. If an application is made for a generation connection or impacts multiple transmission owners, NESO will co-ordinate a process involving the relevant stakeholders to determine the preferred connection solution.

4.2.4 The NESO ensures the relevant onshore or offshore transmission owner undertakes generation connection process studies via CION or HND and makes a connection offer to the customer for a connection point and identifies at a high level the relevant infrastructure work needed to make the connection. Once this offer is signed, the connection is recorded on the Transmission Entry Capacity (TEC) Register and forms a contractually binding connection location and timescale with which the transmission owner, such as NGET. The transmission owner is then required to connect the generation customer or undertake the works to facilitate their connection.

4.2.5 A connection offer will normally be given in respect of a particular geographical area. Sometimes this leads to a connection point located on the existing transmission network. In other circumstances, where no or little existing transmission infrastructure is situated where the connection is required, this will require the provision of new infrastructure. The post-connection offer assessment process enables further evaluation of the preferred connection option and refinement of the preferred transmission solution. This process continues, informed by evolving circumstances and consultation, until an application is submitted for development consent in relation to a transmission project.

4.2.6 NGET assesses the adequacy of its transmission system in accordance with the method defined in the NETS Security and Quality of Supply Standard (SQSS). We are required to assess power flows between regions of the transmission system (Planned Transfers). The Planned Transfer from the region is calculated by taking the Average Cold Spell (ACS) Peak Demand in the region and the generation operating in the region then modelling the flow expected as set out in the NETS SQSS. The Planned Transfer is therefore the amount of power which will flow in or out of the region at ACS peak. Planned Transfer calculations will always consider the power flows for ACS peak demand conditions, as less generation will be entering the market when demand is lower.

4.2.7 Any transmission system is susceptible to faults that interfere with the ability of transmission circuits to carry power. Most faults are temporary, many are related to weather conditions such as lightning or severe weather, and many circuits can be restored to operation automatically in minutes after a fault. Other faults may be of longer duration and would require repair or replacement of failed electrical equipment.

4.2.8 Whilst some of these faults may be more likely than others, faults may occur at any time, and it would not be acceptable to have a significant interruption to supplies as a result of specified fault conditions, including combinations of faults. The principle underlying the NETS SQSS is that the NETS should have sufficient spare capability or "redundancy" such that defined fault conditions do not result in widespread supply interruptions. The level of security of supply has been determined to ensure that the risk of supply interruptions is managed to a level that maintains a minimum standard of transmission system performance. The faults we need to design the system to be compliant with are called "Secured Events"

4.2.9 The NETS SQSS defines the performance required of the NETS in terms of Quality and Security of Supply for secured events that at all times:

- electricity system frequency should be maintained within statutory limits;
- no part of the NETS should be overloaded beyond its capability;
- voltage performance should be within acceptable statutory limits; and
- the system should remain electrically stable.

4.3 Existing transmission network

4.3.1 The transmission network in the area of the projects was primarily constructed in the 1960s, at the same time as much of the rest of the transmission system. It was designed to connect the in-land large coal fired power stations in the region, with changes occurring in the later parts of the century connecting gas fired power stations in the Humber region in particular. Little or no transmission infrastructure was constructed in some areas, so there is currently limited ability to support new connections on the coast.

4.3.2 The existing transmission system in the North of England and the Midlands is shown in Figure 4.1. The geography under consideration for the projects is shown in Figure 4.2.

Figure 4.1 – The National Electricity Transmission System in the North and Midlands

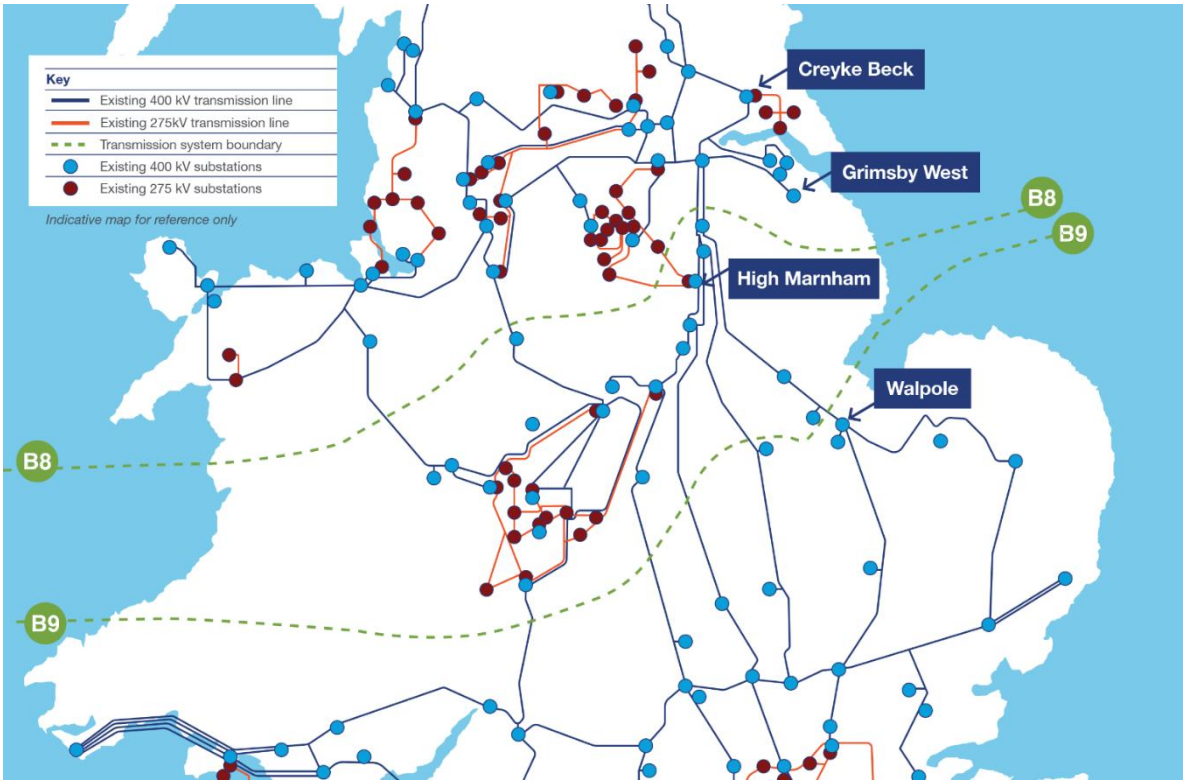
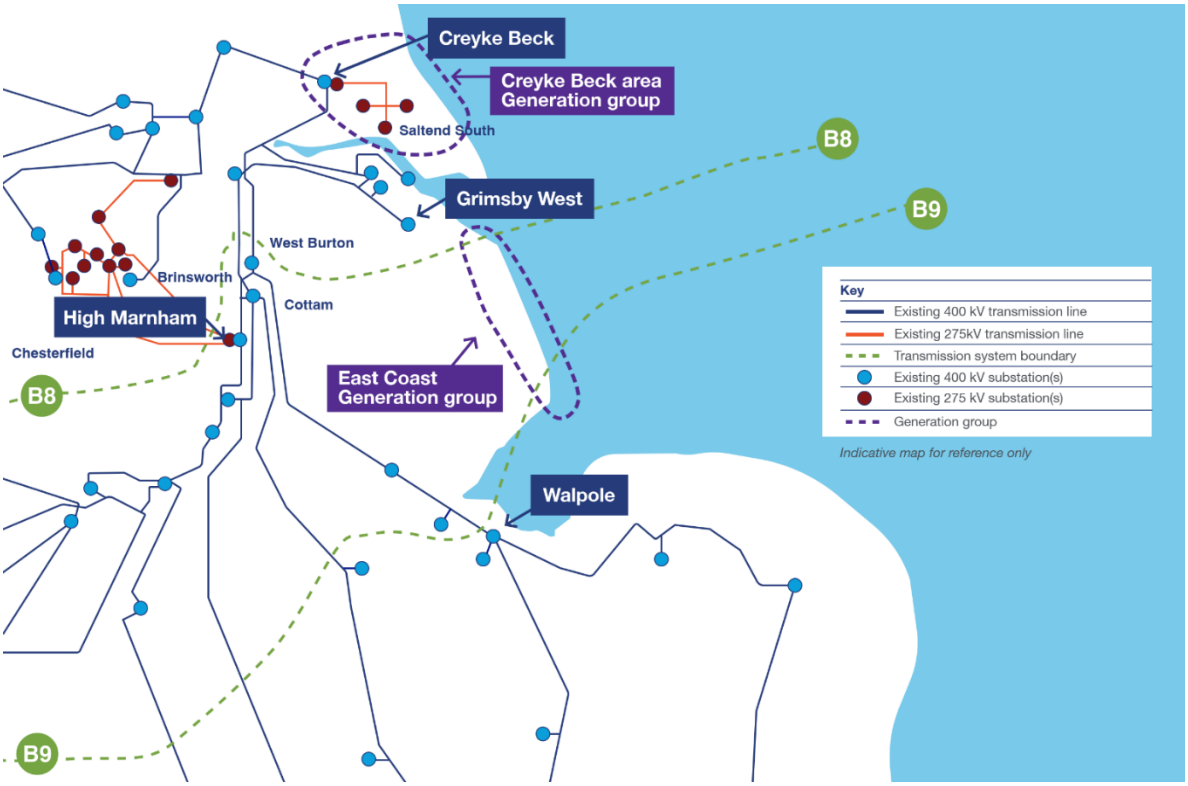


Figure 4.2 – The East Coast (Lincolnshire and Yorkshire) region transmission system



4.4 Generation groups

4.4.1 Figure 4.2 identifies the two generation group areas under consideration, the first being the Creyke Beck Area generation group and the second being the East Coast Connections generation group (for east coast connections being made from South of the Humber Estuary to North of the Wash).

4.4.2 The Creyke Beck Area generation group consists of existing generation connecting into the current Creyke Beck substation, Hedon substation and the Salt End North and South substations. It also comprises proposed generation contracted to connect in the vicinity of the Creyke Beck substation. This is currently a combination of offshore wind, interconnectors, energy storage and CCGT (combined cycle gas turbine).

4.4.3 The East Coast Connections generation group consists of proposed generation contracted to connect in an area south of the Humber Estuary and north of the Wash. This is currently a combination of offshore wind, interconnectors, energy storage / solar (PV array) and CCGT.

4.4.4 The generation contracted to connect to the generation group areas specifically, is shown in Table 4.1 and Table 4.2 below. These tables indicate the contracted generation within each generation group. This is the latest position as of July 2026. Because the generation projects contracted to connect may change from time to time, in any year (or at any time in a year) the TEC register is therefore updated as and when these changes occur. Accordingly, the TEC register may, when reviewed at any time in any given year, have different listed projects (or different capacities listed for projects).

Table 4.1 – Connections to Creyke Beck Area (From TEC Registers Sept 2026)

Project Name	Type	Capacity (MW)	Connection Year
Saltend	CCGT	1100.0 MW	Existing
Humber Gateway	Offshore Wind	220.0 MW	Existing
Westermost Rough	Offshore Wind	206.5 MW	Existing
Pillswood BESS Phase 1	Energy Storage	49.9 MW	Existing
Pillswood BESS Phase 2	Energy Storage	49.9 MW	Existing
Dogger Bank Project A	Offshore Wind	1200.0 MW	Existing
Dogger Bank Project 4	Offshore Wind	1200.0 MW	Existing
The Superconnection	Interconnector	1000.0 MW	2027
Hornsea Power Station 4 - Stage 1	Offshore Wind	1500.0 MW	2028
Creyke Beck Battery 2	Energy Storage	28.5 MW	2028
Hornsea Power Station 4 - Stage 2	Offshore Wind	1100.0 MW	2029
Dogger Bank South-East	Offshore Wind	400.0 MW	2030

Project Name	Type	Capacity (MW)	Connection Year
Dogger Bank South-West	Offshore Wind	400.0 MW	2030
Dogger Bank D	Offshore Wind	1450.0 MW	2031
Dogger Bank South-East	Offshore Wind	1050.0 MW	2031
Dogger Bank South-West	Offshore Wind	1050.0 MW	2031
Clean Air - Creyke Beck	Energy Storage	500.0 MW	2033
Creyke Beck Solar Farm	PV Array	320.0 MW	2033
Hall Ings Farm	PV Array	100.0 MW	2034
Continental Link	Interconnector	1800.0 MW	2035
Creyke Beck PV & BESS	Energy Storage & PV Arrays	249.9 MW	2035
Bute Hydrogen Project 2	CCGT	3600.0 MW	2035
NEL Suggit	Energy Storage	240.0 MW	2035
Saltend North BESS	Energy Storage	200.0 MW	2035
Kenley House Solar Park	PV Array	150.0 MW	2039
Flinton Road	Energy Storage	600.0 MW	2039
Total		19,764.7 MW	

Table 4.2 – East Coast Connections between South Humber to North Wash (From TEC Registers Sept 2026)

Project Name	Type	Capacity (MW)	Connection Year
KXP Immingham	Energy Storage	80.0 MW	installed
*GT R4 Windfarm (Outer Dowsing)	Offshore Wind	1500.0 MW	2030
SENECA	Interconnector	1200.0 MW	2031
*Ossian 2	Offshore Wind	600.0 MW	2031
Mablethorpe Storage	Storage/CCGT	1500.0 MW	2031
Eco Grimsby West	Energy Storage & PV Array	249.0 MW	2033
*Meridian Solar Farm	Energy Storage & PV Array	750.0 MW	2033
*Spalding PV and BESS	Energy Storage & PV Array	480.0 MW	2033
Ossian 4	Offshore Wind	1008.0 MW	2033
Mablethorpe Green Energy Centre	Energy Storage & PV Array	1025.0 MW	2033
*Ossian 3	Offshore Wind	600.0 MW	2033
Great Coates BESS	Energy Storage	300.0 MW	2033
Eco Mablethorpe	Energy Storage & PV Array	249.0 MW	2034
Carbon Free 2030	Energy Storage/Solar	500.0 MW	2034
Stallingborough BESS	Energy Storage/Solar	500.0 MW	2034
East Lincolnshire Solar	Energy Storage/Solar	800.0 MW	2035
Bute Hydrogen Project 3	CCGT & Energy Storage	3600.0MW	2035
Grimsby BESS	Energy Storage	500.0 MW	2035
West Grimsby Farm	PV Array	150.0 MW	2035
North Ray Solar Farm 2	PV Array	180.0 MW	2035
Stallingborough Carbon Capture	CCGT	906.0 MW	2035
Total		16,677.0 MW	

**Note - *3,930MW of generation is connecting to Weston Marsh substation(s) with >4 transmission circuits connecting to this location.*

4.4.5 Both the Creyke Beck Area and East Coast Connection generation groups have a significant amount of customer generation contracted to connect in each area. Applying the requirements of the NETS SQSS generation criteria, these connection contracts provide the starting locations for reinforcements. To comply with the NETS SQSS, sufficient transmission capacity must be provided to allow the full contracted generation to connect in each generation group. This generation is then assumed to be dispatched in typical power station operation regime as set out in the NETS

SQSS. The amount of energy provided by generation is often lower than its installed capacity due to lower input energy, capacity held in reserve and some generation pulled back as an excess of supply for that time is occurring. This means total output is unlikely so the system is designed to meet the typical expected generation outputs and therefore will be less than the total installed capacity in the group. This additional generation connected in each area will also impact the B8 and B9 system boundaries along with the generation from the North and Scotland flowing to large demand centres across the boundaries.

4.5 Boundaries

4.5.1 The transmission system shown in Figure 4.1 and Figure 4.2 also shows two system boundaries, B8 and B9.

4.5.2 A boundary splits the system into two parts, crossing critical circuit paths that carry power between areas and where power flow limitations may be encountered. Boundaries help identify regions where reinforcement is most needed by enabling analysis of power transfers between separated areas. They can be local boundaries, which are small areas of the Transmission System with a high concentration of generation, or wider boundaries, which are large areas containing significant amounts of both generation and demand. Boundary definitions have evolved over many years of planning and operating the transmission system.

4.5.3 Future boundary requirements are assessed using the Future Energy Scenarios (FES) 2025, which is the current version as of July 2026, to identify expected future power flows across the boundaries. Power system analysis is conducted by the NESO and NGET to determine the boundary capability, which is the maximum power flow that can be transferred across a boundary while maintaining compliance with technical standards. Limiting factors on transmission capacity include thermal circuit rating, voltage constraints, and dynamic stability.

4.6 Boundaries B8 and B9

4.6.1 Boundaries B8 and B9 are wider system boundaries containing areas with significant amounts of both generation and demand. Studies have been undertaken jointly by National Grid and NESO to assess the impact of changes in demand and generation on power flows across the boundary and to determine if these impacts require reinforcement to the transmission system.

4.6.2 The boundaries B8 and B9 as described above have been evaluated using the Economy Planned Transfer assessment, which takes prescribed generation contributions from above and below the boundary, alongside demand in each area to determine the expected flow across the boundary. In this case the Economy Planned Transfer condition represents the most onerous boundary condition which must be secured by NGET to the requirements set out in the NETS SQSS.

4.6.3 Each of the circuits which cross the B8 and B9 boundaries has a capacity during the winter ACS period. The summation of the capacity for all of these circuits provides the pre-fault capacity. The post-fault capacity is defined by the remaining capacity across a boundary following the worst fault "Secured Event" as described above.

4.6.4 Each boundary will then see flows across it based upon the circuit parameters and system conditions, when the natural flow of energy on every circuit will be maximised.

This is known as the circuit boundary capability, which is based upon the capability seen following the worst fault "secured event". The following capacities and capabilities are applicable to the boundaries by 2035 should no reinforcement occur. Reinforcements across the boundary would seek to deliver enhanced boundary capacity between 2030 and 2035, delivering sufficient capacity to meet the 2035 capacity requirements set out below. If all reinforcements were not delivered ahead of 2035 for each generation group and boundaries significant generation projects and system constraints would be incurred for energy seeking to meet the government 2030 goals and beyond. This means any delays would have a significant impact on government ambitions and consumers need for sustainable and affordable energy.

4.6.5 Existing B8 Boundary:

- Pre-Fault Capacity 25,201 MW
- Post-Fault Capacity 19,096 MW
- Capability (Post-Fault) 19,096 MW

4.6.6 Existing B9 Boundary:

- Pre-Fault Capacity 24,411 MW
- Post-Fault Capacity 18,033 MW
- Capability (Post-Fault) 14,104 MW

4.6.7 Table 4.3 below shows how the existing generation groups and boundaries perform in 2035 for the expected planned transfer flows.

Table 4.3 – Existing boundary performance by 2035 and generation group capacity to last contract date currently 2039 in the TEC register which will be facilitated by proposed need

	Generation Group or Boundary Export	2035 Post Fault Capability	2035 Post Fault Capacity	Capability Deficit(-) / Surplus(+)	Capacity Deficit(-) / Surplus (+)	Secured Event Fault
Creyke Beck contracts to 2039 (Generation)	19,764.7 MW	6,930 MW	6,930 MW	-12,834.7 MW	-12,834.7 MW	Creyke Beck – Keadby 400kV
*East Coast contracts to 2035 (Generation)	16,677.0 MW	0 MW	0 MW	-16,677.0 MW	-16,677.0 MW	N/A
B8 – 2035 (Boundary)	30,782 MW	19,096 MW	19,096 MW	-11,686 MW	-11,686 MW	Keadby – West Burton 400kV double circuit
B9 – 2035 (Boundary)	25,901 MW	14,104 MW	18,033 MW	-11,797 MW	-7,868MW	Walpole – Bicker Fen/ Spalding 400kV double circuit

**Note - *2,730MW of generation is connecting to Weston Marsh substation(s) with at least four transmission circuits connecting to this location.*

4.6.8 Table 4.3 shows that the Creyke Beck area generation group requires additional transmission capacity to facilitate the connections in that area. This sets the location where this capacity is required because there is not sufficient transmission capacity in the region to accommodate all the connections in compliance with NETS SQSS. The East Coast generation connection group also requires transmission capacity. There is no existing transmission capacity where the connections are required. The capacity of transmission developments required will be in the order of 7GW for Creyke Beck Area and 7GW in East Coast Area (noting some connections in the East Coast area are made to Weston Marsh substation(s)) to accommodate typical power station operation in these generation groups. As explained earlier the system is designed to meet a typical power station operation which is not the full generation capacity in the area.

4.6.9 In normal circumstances the transmission requirement should be less than these levels. This is due to the generation connection criteria in the SQSS requiring the network to be designed based upon typical power station operating regimes within a generating group. This level changes depending on which individual power station is the subject of the assessment. So, for simplicity, the transmission entry capacity for each generator is shown in Tables Table 4.1, Table 4.2 and Table 4.3. This shows

additional capacity is clearly needed. The total is reflective of all transmission entry capacity of generators within the group. The outputs from interconnectors, solar (PV Array), battery and CCGT treatment is defined in the NETS SQSS to determine the credible operating background which in both generation group cases currently requires provision of circa 7GW of post fault capacity.

4.6.10 The boundary assessments completed on the Economy Planned Transfer, as defined in the NETS SQS, already account for generation contribution. To ensure that an appropriate measure of need using current assessments of capacity at the date of this report, we have taken the Holistic Transition, Electric Engagement and Hydrogen Evolution scenarios, from the ETYS 2025 based upon FES 2025 backgrounds, as of June 2026. An average of all three scenarios has been applied, which aligns with NESO's background scenarios up to 2035, to identify expected future boundary flows.

4.6.11 As described in the “Communicating our thermal needs” section set out in the NESO ETYS 25 documentation, the FES boundary graphs for each area display two sets of shaded areas. The 50th Percentile of power flows lies in the 25% and 75% range of the graph. The 90th percentile of power flows lies in the 5% to 95% range of the ETYS graphs. It states that where the capability of the boundary is between these two regions, 75% and 95%, over 20 years, then there may be a need for reinforcement.

4.6.12 NGET uses the average of the 95% percentile number across the five scenarios for boundary analysis. This ensures that for all five scenarios, our need case capacity and capability requirement would lie between the 75% and 95% ranges of annual power flows for all five scenarios and demonstrating the need for reinforcement regardless of which scenario occurs. Against this assessment in all three FES 25 scenarios should there is clearly a shortfall against boundary capability and capacity for the B8 and B9 boundaries that by 2035 will require reinforcement.

4.6.13 The largest capacity AC route NGET currently accommodates on our network is a two-circuit transmission route, each circuit of 3465 MW capacity each, on a single set of towers/Pylon (6930 MW double circuit capacity).

4.6.14 The largest HVDC capacity systems we currently accommodate with HVDC cables is 2000MW.

4.6.15 Therefore, B8 will require more than the capacity of one 400kV AC double circuit or multiple HVDC connections to be provided for the boundary capability deficit to be addressed. To accommodate future requirements, B8 needs to be reinforced by two double AC 400 kV transmission routes (four circuits in total) or 6 HVDC connections to address the -11,686 MW boundary capability deficit by 2035.

4.6.16 The B9 boundary will require one 400kV AC double circuit or 3 HVDC Connections, to address the boundary capability deficit of -11,797 MW by 2035. It should be noted that the EGL 3 and 4 projects described below in section 4.7, have options to address any additional shortfall on the B9 boundary.

4.6.17 In both cases it is clear even if flows could be maximised across the boundary for fault secured events, the boundary deficits would still require the reinforcements described for B8 and B9 above.

4.6.18 The NESO independently provide their evaluation of boundaries for the ETYS. For the B8 and B9 boundaries, the exports in Table 3.3 align with these assessments.

4.6.19 From 2035, further increases in system boundary requirements are expected and this is reflected in NGET's existing contractual commitments. To address these needs, additional reinforcements to these boundaries are expected in Central England and Wales, which will supplement these system boundaries in the future. This will facilitate connections beyond 2035 when further increases in generation are expected in all regions, and which will be subject to their own detailed need case and options assessment. Any future requirements would be informed by further need case assessments and option appraisals. These emerging requirements do not affect the need case set out within this report.

4.7 EGL 3 and EGL 4

4.7.1 NGET has evaluated the connection of offshore transmission circuits from Scotland known as EGL 3 and EGL 4. These projects each consist of 2 GW voltage source convertor (VSC) high voltage direct current (HVDC) transmission circuits. This will transfer 4 GW of energy from Scotland to England and have been subject to their own strategic option assessment. How these projects will interact with the B8 and B9 boundaries, and options to reinforce them, are highlighted later in this report, however, are documented fully in the EGL 3 and EGL 4 standalone Strategic Options report.

4.8 Need case conclusion

4.8.1 As described above, there are four distinct issues that this needs case identifies:

- Provision of circa 7GW capacity to the Creyke Beck area generation group.
- Provision of circa 7GW capacity to the East Coast area generation group
- Provision of 11,686 MW of capability to the B8 boundary
- Provision of 11,797MW of capability to the B9 boundary

4.8.2 The remainder of this report considers strategic options that resolve the need set out above, alongside proposals set out in the EGL3 and EGL4 separate strategic options report.

5. Identification of strategic options

5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 When a need to reinforce the National Electricity Transmission System (NETS) is established, National Grid Electricity Transmission (NGET) brings together a multi-disciplinary scheme team to evaluate a wide range of options. This team produces a list of strategic options which can be further refined through evaluation processes, and which are described within this report. The scheme team keeps the options under review as changes to the drivers emerge. Through this review, options can be modified, or deselected and new options can be added. This chapter provides the chronological history of the projects that have been evaluated.

5.2 Option development

5.2.1 The growth of offshore wind in the North Sea requires a change in the transmission system from one focused on large fossil fuel generation located away from the coast to a system focused more on connections in coastal regions of England and Wales. NGET alongside the ESO has examined East Coast strategies as part of long-term planning which ultimately informed the development of strategic options.

5.2.2 In 2019 the Electricity Ten-Year Statement (ETYS) identified that system boundary B8 between the North and South of England would have insufficient capability by 2030 to remain compliant with the NETS Security and Quality of Supply Standard (SQSS).

5.2.3 As a consequence, the 2020 Network Options Assessment (NOA) document produced by ESO recommended that network reinforcements should be developed to resolve the issue identified in the 2019 ETYS. The recommendations included the construction of new circuits, as described in this document, and a number of smaller reinforcements such as power flow controllers to maximise the benefits of new and existing circuits.

5.2.4 Scheme team members were brought together to produce a long list of options, which was subsequently filtered to evaluate the options that met the recommendations of NOA in 2020.

5.2.5 In 2019, the initial project drivers were to facilitate additional transmission capacity for the generation connection groups at Creyke Beck and East Coast, whilst also providing capacity across the B8 boundary.

5.2.6 In 2019/20, the following generation group and boundary exports were identified and used as part of the options assessment process.

- 10.8 GW of total connections in the Creyke Beck area generation group
- 4.6GW of total connection in the East Coast generation group
- 20.6GW of capability across B8

5.2.7 These requirements are less than those set out in the need case (see Chapter 4). This is because more connection applications have been received since 2019/20, along with additional transfers expected from the North of England and Scotland. These drive higher requirements for the Creyke Beck area and East Coast generation groups, and create an increased transfer requirement across B8, and lead to a need also to resolve a capacity shortfall on the B9 boundary, south of B8.

5.2.8 As part of NESO evaluation process to produce the NOA they require that NGET, as part of its options appraisal, produce a high-level scope with an indicative construction delivery date and capital cost for all of the options proposed. NESO also requires us to explain the impact of each option on boundary capability, which we assess against the relevant study background at the time of assessment. NESO use this information as part of their Cost Benefit Analysis (CBA) process, which identifies any variance in benefit to consumers across options, based upon estimated constraint costs. The outcome of the CBA is reflected in the regular NOA publication with a proceed signal against recommended investments.

5.2.9 Through this options identification process, we identified the following options, a combination of which satisfied the need as it was defined in 2019/20.

- Creyke Beck to Killingholme South (West)
- Creyke Beck to Killingholme South (East, via New Hedon)
- Killingholme South to Cottam
- Creyke Beck to Grimsby West (West)
- Grimsby West to Cottam
- Creyke Beck to Grimsby West (East via New Hedon)
- Creyke Beck to Thorpe Marsh (Direct)
- Creyke Beck to Thorpe Marsh (Reuse of ZDA route)
- Thorpe Marsh to Cottam
- Thorpe Marsh to High Marnham
- Creyke Beck to Cottam
- Creyke Beck to High Marnham
- Lincolnshire Coastal Node to Grimsby West
- Lincolnshire Coastal Node to Weston Marsh (two double circuits)
- Lincolnshire Coastal Node to Bicker Fen
- Lincolnshire Coastal Node to Bicker Fen (two double circuits)
- Lincolnshire Coastal Node to Weston Marsh

5.2.10 Since the initial publication of this SOR (strategic options report), the terminology for the Lincolnshire Coastal Node has now changed to new Lincolnshire Connection substation(s). For clarity and consistency, in the options listed above, they are still referred to Lincolnshire Coastal Node.

5.2.11 We also appraised each option for environmental and socio-economic impact, considering a 20 km study area around the strategic option identified. This was done to ensure we understood the main consequences of selecting each strategic option. This meant we could identify the likely significant effects and make comparisons between the options.

5.2.12 All the options were appraised for the purposes of identifying an initial preferred option and providing the relevant information for the independent NESO CBA process for evaluation against operational constraints.

5.2.13 It should be noted that projects which have the shortest delivery timescales will have advantages over those that deliver in longer timescales. Provision of capacity at the earliest opportunity can provide benefit by avoiding constraint costs. Constraint cost evaluation is carried out by NESO and is captured in their independent CBA process and is regularly evaluated in the NOA updates.

5.2.14 As described in this report, the need case has changed. Options have been developed to meet this need case, which are described in the sections that follow. Any differences between these new options and those identified in 2019/20 are explained in the next section.

5.3 Updated name for ‘new Creyke Beck substation’

5.3.1 The ‘new Creyke Beck substation’ is now known as ‘Birkhill Wood 400kV substation’. However, for clarity and consistency with the previous SOR, this SOR Update continues to refer to ‘new Creyke Beck substation’ throughout

5.4 Options assessment process

5.4.1 This updated SOR is part of an iterative process, investigating prospective opportunities. While there may be some alterations as the Projects evolve, these will be supplemented by feedback from consultation exercises, along with other elements such as design evolution. The strategic option remains preferred. Consistent with Our Approach to Consenting, we will continue to assess relevant technical, environmental, socio-economic and cost factors as part of ongoing appraisals.

5.4.2 National Grid has published "Our Approach to Consenting" which sets out how we develop our strategic proposal. We apply the following approach to evaluate options we take forward.

5.4.3 Firstly, we identify if our existing network could be modified or enhanced to deliver the required connection or increase in capacity.

5.4.4 If we identify there is a need that is beyond the capability of our existing network, as clearly set out in our project need case, we consider strategic options to provide the required increase in capacity.

5.4.5 We apply a technical filter as part of this assessment to ensure any solution meets the need, either individually or as part of a wider group of reinforcements. There are many ways to achieve increases to our network capability. To allow us to focus on those that best meet our obligations to the environment and consumers we apply a "benefits filter", which ensures any option we present has a comparable benefit over an alternative. The criteria for an option to be considered are any of the following:

- environmental benefit;
- technical system benefit; or
- capital and lifetime cost benefit.

5.4.6 Where options are very closely aligned across benefits, then options will be included for appraisal to ensure we capture possible solutions that are of very similar capability.

5.4.7 All options taken forward for appraisal are evaluated in respect of environmental constraints, socio-economic effects, technology alternatives, capital and lifetime costs. Undertaking this appraisal ensures stakeholders can see how we have made our judgments and balanced the relevant factors in accordance with our legal duties.

5.4.8 The assessment process considers the following areas:

- Environmental assessment topics which consider whether there are environmental constraints or issues of sufficient importance to influence decision making at a strategic level, having particular regard for internationally or nationally important receptors.
- Socio economic topics which consider whether there are socio economic constraints or issues of sufficient importance to influence decision making at a strategic level, having particular regard for internationally or nationally important receptors.
- Consideration of technical benefits includes, whether the option is providing the required capacity to meet the need case; whether the option has particular system benefits over alternatives; whether the option introduces any system complexity that would cause system operability issues.
- Capital and lifetime costs considers a range of factors:
  - capital cost of the substation and wider works.
  - capital cost of the circuit costs for each technology appraised; and
  - circuit lifetime costs, including circuit capital cost, cost of losses over 40 years and cost of operation over 40 years.

5.4.9 When considering each strategic option, we estimate circuit cost information for the following technology options for all land-based options:

- 400 kV alternating current (AC) overhead line.
- 400 kV AC underground cable.
- 400 kV AC gas insulated line (GIL).
- 525 kV high voltage direct current (HVDC) underground cable and converter stations.

5.4.10 When considering each strategic option, we provide circuit cost information for the following technology options for all offshore based options:

- 400 kV AC Offshore cable.
- 525 kV HVDC Offshore cable and converter stations.

5.4.11 A full evaluation and costs used in our assessments can be found in Appendix D.

5.4.12 In this appraisal, all options are considered using information appropriate to this stage of their development on the assumption that they are deliverable in a reasonable timescale. Timescales and deliverability would only be considered further in the assessment process should they become differentiating factors in the selection

of the option that best meets our environmental and legal obligations. If these issues of delivery timescales and risk do become differentiating factors in selection of an option, the issue would be set out clearly in the options conclusion. If it is not differentiating the factor will not be considered further for this assessment.

5.4.13 At the initial appraisal stage, we prepare indicative estimates of the capital costs. These indicative estimates are based on the high-level scope of works defined for each strategic option in respect of each technology option that is considered to be feasible. As these estimates are prepared before detailed design work has been carried out, we make equivalent assumptions for each option. Final project costs for any solution taken forward following detailed design, consenting and mitigation will be in excess of any high-level appraisal cost. However, all options would likely incur these increases proportional to initial estimate in the development of a detailed solution. This methodology ensures that all options for appraisal proposes are compared on a like for like basis.

5.4.14 Strategic options are identified at a very high level as being electrical solutions between geographic points. Therefore, the potential circuit lengths are derived by taking a straight-line distance between the points and adding 20% to accommodate potential route deviations that might be required if the route proceeds forward to more detailed routeing and siting. Where a clear obstacle exists such as an estuary, water course or geographical feature an alternative route length will be derived and explained in the option. Where an offshore alternative is presented, straight lines will be used to a midpoint offshore and 20% added to provide variation in route length.

5.4.15 These initial option lengths do not define route corridors, and environmental appraisal is provided over a wide study area between points of connection. Any routes for circuit technologies to take would be subject to detailed routeing and siting for any strategic option taken forward as a preferred option(s).

5.4.16 As indicated in the strategic options identification chapter (Chapter 6) a number of options were previously evaluated, which no longer meet the criteria for evaluation when considering the benefits filter or the revised need case set out in this report. These comprised:

- Options through Thorpe Marsh - as all these options required through connections to Cottam or High Marham from Creyke Beck, there is no advantage against the three benefits filters over the direct route appraised with this report.
- Due to the need case changes and requirement to provide additional capacity over B8, options to Killingholme South offer no advantage to Grimsby West alternatives. In both cases, the substations are north of the B8 boundary and require additional transmission south across the B8 boundary. Both options require similar routes with greater ability to do this via Grimsby West.
- The need case now requires that boundary reinforcement extends across the B9 boundary. Bicker Fen has no advantage over options further to the south, as it is north of the B9 boundary. The reinforcement would therefore have to extend south from Bicker Fen and offers no environmental, technical or cost advantage to the alternatives considered.

5.4.17 As the need case has changed, options that were not previously evaluated but which may offer benefits over those considered need to be captured for comparison. The following options have been introduced:

- Subsea alternative options which may have environmental and socio-economic differences when compared with alternatives and that might be advantageous.
- Options that provide capacity across B9 and connect to an interconnected part of the system, known as the Main Interconnected Transmission System. This is a point on the system where there are more than two circuits south of the connection point such that energy can still flow south if a fault occurs on any two southern circuits.

5.4.18 The options in the following sections of this report have been taken forward in this document as they meet the need case and have been selected using the methodology set out above.

5.5 Strategic options overview

5.5.1 Table 5.1 below was described in detail in the need case chapter. This table shows the drivers for reinforcement of the transmission system with the capacity deficits for generation groups and capability deficits for boundaries highlighted.

Table 5.1 – Existing boundary performance by 2035 and generation group capacity to last contract date currently 2039 which will be facilitated by proposed need

	Generation Group or Boundary Export	2035 Post Fault Capability	2035 Post Fault Capacity	Capability Deficit(-) / Surplus(+)	Capacity Deficit(-) / Surplus (+)	Secured Event Fault
Creyke Beck contracts to 2039 (Generation)	19,764.7 MW	6,930 MW	6,930 MW	-12,834.7 MW	-12,834.7 MW	Creyke Beck – Keadby 400kV
*East Coast contracts to 2035 (Generation)	16,677.0 MW	0 MW	0 MW	-16,677.0 MW	-16,677.0 MW	N/A
B8 – 2035 (Boundary)	30,782 MW	19,096 MW	19,096 MW	-11,686 MW	-11,686 MW	Keadby – West Burton 400kV double circuit
B9 – 2035 (Boundary)	25,901 MW	14,104 MW	18,033 MW	-11,797 MW	-7,868MW	Walpole – Bicker Fen/ Spalding 400kV double circuit

5.5.2 As described in the need case, the connection of additional generation to the generation groups requires the transmission system to be reinforced. The B8 boundary will require two 400kV AC double circuit or six HVDC Connections of transmission capacity circuits to deliver >11 GW boundary capability, while B9 will require one 400kV AC double circuit or three HVDC Connections transmission capacity to deliver >6 GW of capacity.

5.5.3 Providing no infrastructure for the need case set out would mean the National Electricity Transmission System (NETS) in the area would not be compliant with the NETS Security and Quality of Supply Standard (SQSS) and NGET would not be complying with its transmission licence. Therefore, the provision of infrastructure is a requirement and a key necessity for delivering government "Net Zero" targets.

5.5.4 The need above identifies a requirement for two sets of AC 400kV transmission circuits or multiple HVDC connections to resolve the NETS SQSS compliance and two distinct sets of issues:

- Issue (a), a circuit is required to ensure compliance from the Creyke Beck area generation group whilst also providing >6 GW of boundary capacity across the B8 boundary.
- Issue (b), a circuit is required to provide capacity to the East Coast generation group whilst increasing the boundary capacity across B8 by an additional >6 GW (giving 12 GW capacity) and providing >6 GW of capacity across the B9 boundary.

5.5.5 The following strategic options have been identified as having the potential to resolve these distinct issues while complying with the NETS SQSS.

5.5.6 Figure 5.1 outlines options considered within this report to resolve Issue (a). Options considered to resolve Issue (b) is illustrated in Figure 5.2. The interactions of the EGL 3 and EGL 4 projects are shown on both Figure 5.1 and Figure 5.2.

Figure 5.1 – Indicative map of strategic options considered to resolve issue (a)

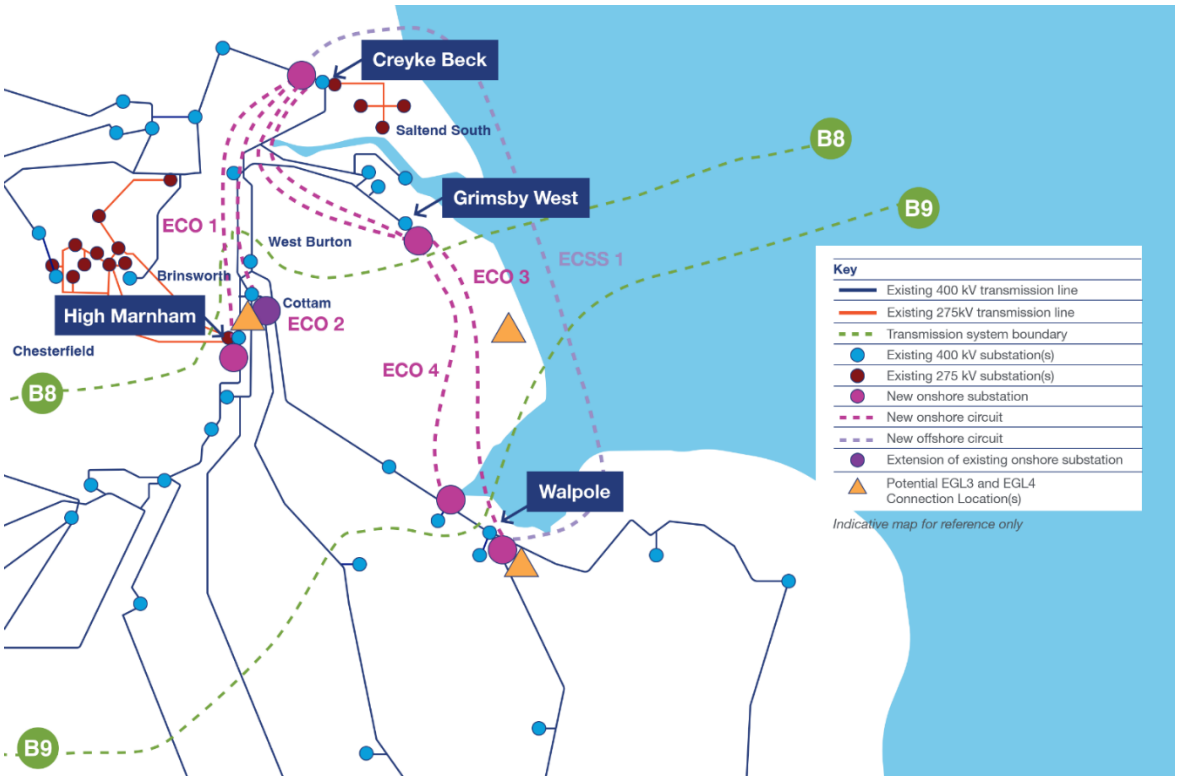
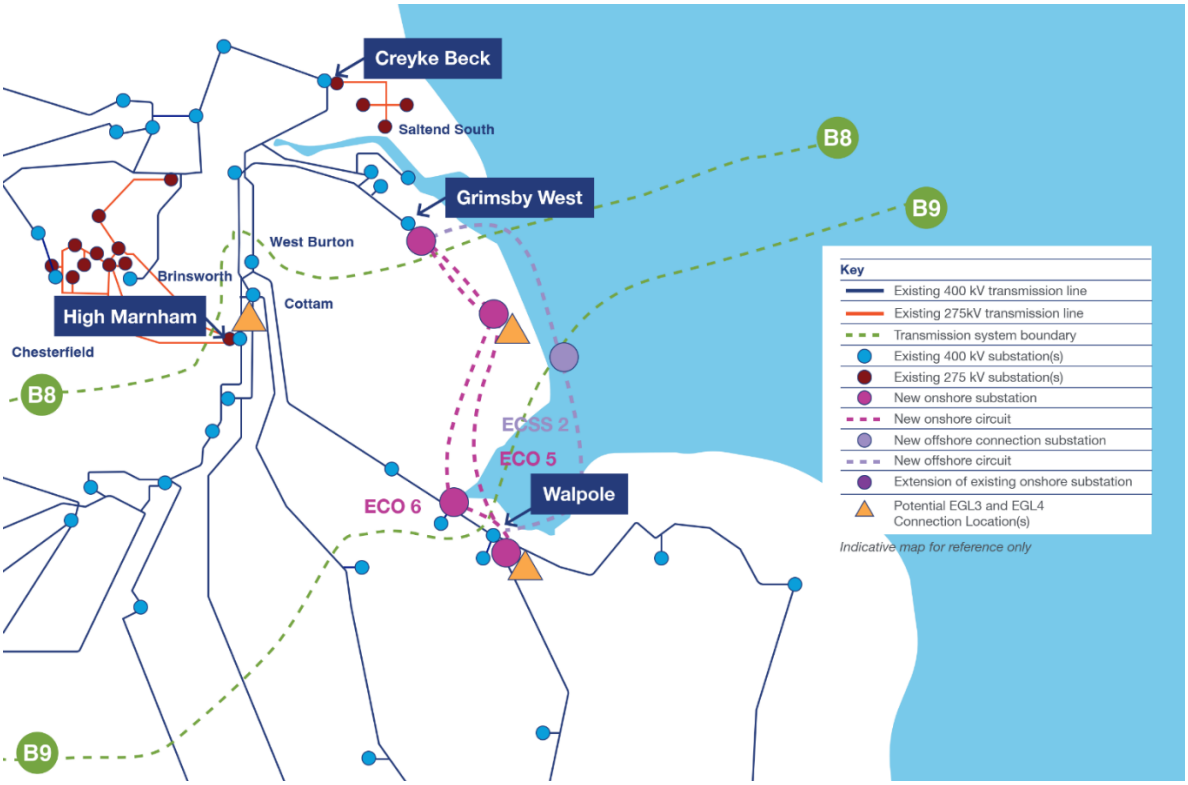


Figure 5.2 – Indicative map of strategic options considered to resolve issue (b)



5.6 Options considered - issue (a)

5.6.1 The options which have been considered with a view to resolving Issue (a) - Creyke Beck area generation group and >6 GW capacity across B8 are:

- ECO 1 - New Creyke Beck to new High Marnham **85 km**
- ECO 2 - New Creyke Beck to Cottam **75 km**
- ECO 3 - New Creyke Beck to new Grimsby West, new Grimsby West to new Walpole B **225 km**
- ECO 4 - New Creyke Beck to new Grimsby West, new Grimsby West to new Weston Marsh substation(s) **200 km**
- ECSS 1 - Subsea from new Creyke Beck - new Walpole B **195 km**

5.6.2 For those onshore options with a connection at Creyke Beck (ECO 1, ECO 2, ECO 3 and ECO 4), both western and eastern sub-options were considered. The western sub-options (located to the west of Hull) assume an overhead line crossing of the Humber Estuary Special Protection Area (SPA) and Special Area of Conservation (SAC). These options would also need to cross the Yorkshire Wolds, a locally important landscape. The eastern sub-options (located to the east of Hull) assume a requirement for tunnelling for around 6 km beneath the Humber, due to the extent of the estuary in this area. The eastern sub-options would potentially be expected to have lower effects upon the Humber Estuary SPA and SAC due to the use of a tunnel. The eastern sub-options would also avoid the Yorkshire Wolds.

5.6.3 It is noted however that, whilst removing the potential impact of bird strike in the immediate vicinity of the Estuary, any tunnelling could still have negative effects upon the Humber Estuary designations, through disturbance and potential hydrogeological

impacts particularly if above-ground infrastructure associated with tunnelling is sited close to the estuary. The potential effects of the western sub-options on the Humber Estuary SPA and SAC site would be dependent on the technologies employed. As such, the project would need to demonstrate that it would not affect the integrity of the Humber Estuary designated sites, including the bird populations that form a qualifying feature of the SPA. It is assumed that a legally and policy-compliant route could be identified at the routeing and siting stage by deploying conventional mitigation. However, if this is not possible then the localised use of undergrounding could help to mitigate or avoid unacceptable effects, where considered necessary.

5.6.4 The capital cost of the eastern (tunnel) sub-options is significantly higher than the western overhead line options for each of ECO 1, ECO 2, ECO 3 and ECO 4. The eastern sub-options would involve additional construction and maintenance risk and would not deliver any greater system benefit. There would also be an impact to the programme in comparison to the western options. Based on the appraisal outcomes, the eastern sub-options for ECO 1, ECO 2, ECO 3 and ECO 4 were not preferred and are not analysed in further detail in this report. However, a summary of the anticipated environmental effects is contained in Appendix G. These eastern options would be reconsidered should detailed assessment of the preferred strategic option identify that it is necessary to do so.

5.6.5 For the subsea option ECSS 1 two coastlines were considered for the southern landfall; the Lincolnshire coast and the north Norfolk Coast. These two discrete sub-options were defined by the national and international nature conservation sites around the Wash, including The Wash SPA and The Wash and North Norfolk Coast SAC, which represent a significant constraint to the routeing and installation of multiple subsea cables.

5.6.6 Whilst a Lincolnshire coast landfall might allow a somewhat shorter overall route length, the extent of onshore cabling is likely to be greater than for a Norfolk Coast landfall.

5.6.7 Whilst an option that landed on either coast would achieve a similar technical performance, the environmental and socio-economic effects of the alternative landfalls could be materially different. Therefore, both sub-options were taken forward for appraisal.

5.7 Options considered - Issue (b)

5.7.1 The options which have been considered with a view to resolving Issue (b) (East Coast generation group, further >6 GW capacity across B8 (12 GW total) and >6 GW of capacity across B9) are:

- ECO 5 - New Grimsby West to New Lincolnshire Connection substation(s), new Lincolnshire Connection substation(s) to new Walpole B **140 km**
- ECO 6 - New Grimsby West to new Lincolnshire Connection substation(s), Lincolnshire Connection substation(s) to new Weston Marsh substation(s), new Weston Marsh substation(s) to new Walpole B **140 km**
- ECSS 2 - Subsea new Grimsby West - Offshore Connection Node - new Walpole B **155 km**

5.7.2 NGET has evaluated the connection of offshore transmission circuits from Scotland known as EGL 3 and EGL 4. These projects each consist of 2 GW voltage source

convertor (VSC) high voltage direct current (HVDC) transmission circuits. This will transfer 4 GW of energy from Scotland to England, and these will be subject to their own strategic option assessment. How these projects will interact with the B8 and B9 boundaries, and options to reinforce them, is highlighted later in this report, however, this is documented fully in the EGL 3 and EGL 4 standalone Strategic Options report.

5.7.3 The interactivity assessment for the EGL 3 and EGL 4 projects to determine the best location for these circuits to provide the best infrastructure solution are:

- EGL Option 1 - New Lincolnshire Connection substation(s)
- EGL Option 2 - Cottam substation connection
- EGL Option 3 - New Walpole B substation connection
- EGL Option 4 - EGL 3 & EGL 4 new Walpole B substation connection, with one project forming a three-ended circuit connecting to New Lincolnshire Connection substation(s) and new Walpole B substation.

5.7.4 Where deemed appropriate, a substation designated as "New" has been assigned an optimal closest existing substation for the purposes of identification. These substations will be subject to a detailed siting assessment should an option be selected.

5.7.5 The B9 boundary for instance is defined as cutting the circuits between Spalding North substation and the existing Walpole substation. New Walpole B could be sited anywhere along that bisecting circuit, south of the Spalding North circuit tee and west of Walpole, to meet the need of crossing the B9 boundary and providing required boundary capacity.

5.7.6 The following sections provide full strategic options evaluation of ECO 1 to 6, ECSS 1 and 2, along with an interactivity assessment of EGL 3 and EGL 4.

5.7.7 For each option a more detailed account of the environmental and socio-economic appraisal is provided in Appendix G. The technical and cost appraisal detailed information is provided in Appendix D.

6. The results of our appraisal of strategic options

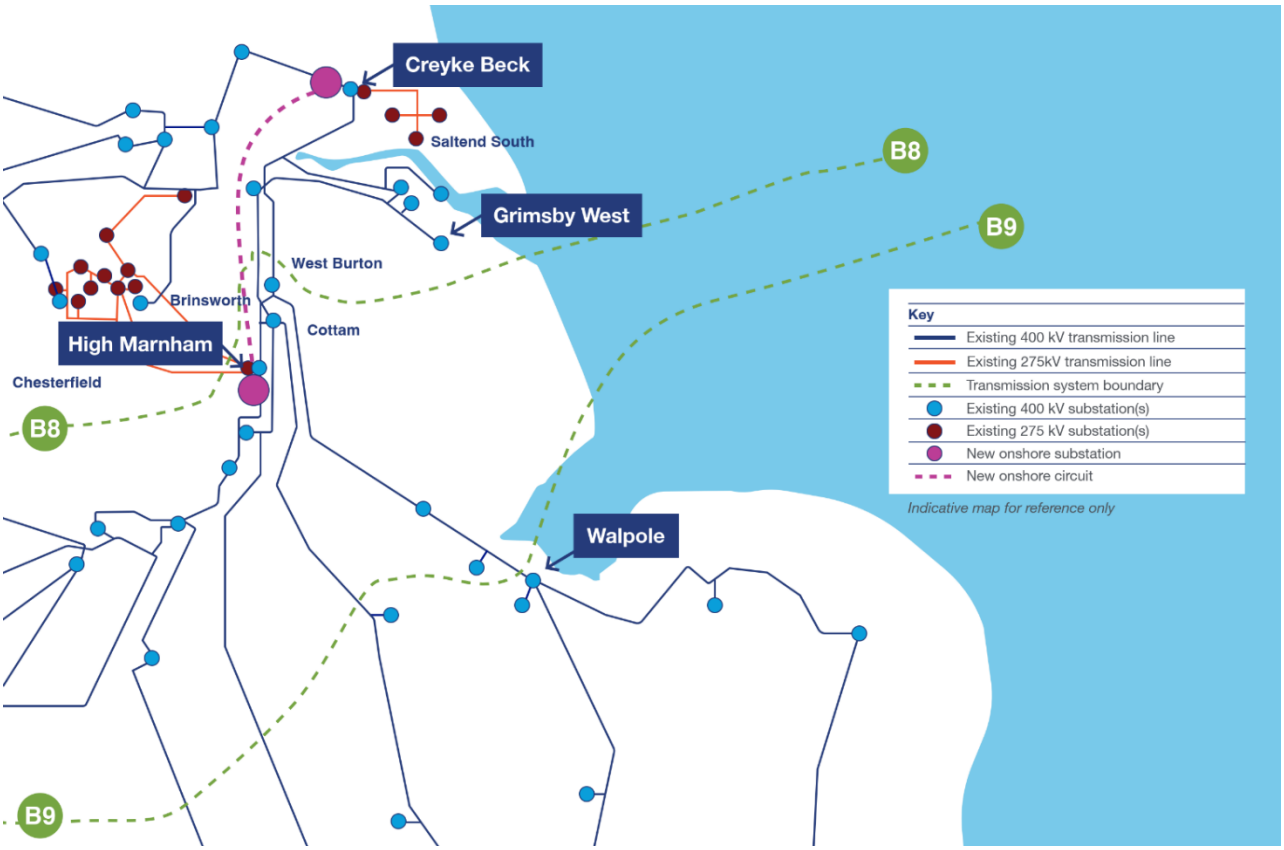
6.1 Introduction

6.1.1 This chapter presents a summary of the findings of our appraisal of the strategic options. Further detail is provided in Appendix G of this report. It discusses each of the options and concludes with a tabulated summary of the appraisal using a colour grade approach to provide a visual indication of the benefits and disadvantages of each option comparatively. As previously stated in this SOR some details including costs may have changed but the proposed option remains preferred.

6.2 Appraisal of strategic option ECO 1 – new Creyke Beck to new High Marnham

6.2.1 Option ECO 1 involves the construction of a new 400kV transmission circuit connection between a new Creyke Beck substation to new High Marnham substation (constructed as part of other works), following a route to the west of the clear geographical obstacle of the Humber estuary. It has a route length of approximately 85 km, as shown in Figure 6.1.

Figure 6.1 – ECO 1 - new Creyke Beck to new High Marnham



6.2.2 An environmental and socio-economic appraisal of the circuit connection has been undertaken. The appraisal is set out in Appendix G. A study area was established in which the project could reasonably be expected to be developed.

6.2.3 For the appraisal of onshore options of significant distance, an overhead line would normally be expected to offer the most economic, efficient, and co-ordinated development and would meet NGET's obligations under section 9 of the Electricity Act. Therefore, the environmental and socio-economic appraisal, which takes into consideration NGET's duty to have regard to the environment in Schedule 9, has sought to establish the impacts of the proposal based upon an assumed use of overhead line technology. This enables the appraisal to highlight areas of highest impact aiding discussions throughout the consultation stage of the project.

6.2.4 Overall, the ECO 1 option is relatively constrained in relation to both ecological, landscape and visual considerations. The overhead line would cross the Humber Estuary Special Protection Area (SPA), Special Area of Conservation (SAC), Ramsar and Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) with potential for direct effects on breeding, over-wintering and passage bird species (collision risk) that are a qualifying feature of some of these designations. Whilst Thorne and Hatfield Moors SPA and Important Bird Area (IBA), Thorne Moor SAC, Hatfield Moor SAC, Hatfield Moors SSSI, Thorne, Crowle and Goole Moors SSSI, and Laughton Forest IBA are avoidable there is the potential for adverse effects on the interest features (both habitats and species) for which a number of these sites are designated, depending on routeing. Any project would need to demonstrate that it would not affect the integrity of designated sites[20]. Based on the information available at this stage of the project's development, it is considered that a route could be identified at the routeing and siting stage that would not affect the integrity of designated sites (once appropriate mitigation was taken into account). The overhead line would cross the Yorkshire Wolds Important Landscape Area (ILA). There would however be opportunities through more detailed routeing and design to prevent and/or reduce the potential for adverse effects. Other key environmental and socio-economic constraints are considered to be less influential with the potential to mitigate adverse impacts through careful consideration of routeing and siting and the use of appropriate technologies.

6.2.5 The key factors affecting ECO 1 (West) are similar to ECO 2 (West), however ECO 1 (West) is approximately 10 km greater in length. All Creyke Beck area generation group onshore options would need to cross the Humber Estuary SPA, SAC, Ramsar and SSSI, with potential for direct effects on breeding, over-wintering and passage bird species (from collision risk). In comparison to ECO 3 (West) and ECO 4 (West), ECO 1 (West) is not located in proximity to The Wash Ramsar Site, SSSI, SPA, IBA and National Nature Reserve, The Wash and North Norfolk Coast IBA and SAC, or Gibraltar Point Ramsar Site and IBA. All Creyke Beck area generation group onshore options would need to cross the Yorkshire Wolds ILA, however ECO 1 (West) would be located further from the Lincolnshire Wolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) in comparison to options ECO 3 (West) and ECO 4 (West). The nature of the environmental and socio-economics effects associated with the OHL options (ECO 1, ECO 2, ECO 3 and ECO 4) including the associated substation infrastructure, would be different in nature to the subsea options which would comprise subsea cables, buried onshore cables and converter stations. With reference to internationally or

[20] Or be able to demonstrate that there were no less damaging options and that there was an imperative need for the project which was of overriding public interest.

nationally important sites, subsea options ECSS 1 (Lincolnshire) and ECSS 1 (Norfolk) would have challenges relating to the installation of buried cables across marine ecological designations. There are also potential heritage constraints associated with the subsea options which may result in potential effects on the setting of a number of scheduled monuments and listed buildings dependent on converter station siting especially in the Creyke Beck area. Overall, on the basis of the information currently available and assuming that appropriate mitigation is undertaken, together with sensitive routing and siting, environmental and socio-economic factors are not considered to differentiate between onshore and offshore options for the purposes of option selection.

6.2.6 Alongside the environmental and socio-economic appraisal of the option, a technical appraisal has established that a transmission connection between Creyke Beck and High Marnham would satisfy the National Electricity Transmission System (NETS) Security and Quality of Supply Standards (SQSS) and resolve the requirement of providing generation group connections at Creyke Beck, whilst providing >6 GW of capacity across the B8 boundary.

6.2.7 This option has been appraised as it meets the technical appraisal requirements of the need case and is compliant with the NETS SQSS.

6.2.8 Technical analysis of this option includes the following:

- advantages from interfacing with upgrades completing ahead of this project, including the upgrade to the Chesterfield to High Marnham circuits to 400 kV. That project has been assigned a Network Options Assessment code of EDEU by the Electricity System Operator and will include a new substation at High Marnham, into which this proposed option would connect.
- High Marnham is situated very close to the demand centres around the conurbations of the east and west Midlands. A connection at this location provides the most effective way for generation to reach the demand and the highest effect on boundary capability in comparison with other options.

6.2.9 As set out in Chapter 5, we undertake a cost evaluation of the following four technologies for onshore options evaluation:

- 400 kV alternating current (AC) overhead line
- 400 kV AC underground cable
- 400 kV AC gas insulated line (GIL)
- 525 kV high voltage direct current (HVDC) underground cable and converter stations

6.2.10 Option ECO 1 requires the following transmission works to satisfy the requirements of the SQSS:

New circuit requirements

- AC options use hi-capacity double circuits (two 400 kV AC routes) with a total capacity of up to 6930 mega volt ampere (MVA); or
- HVDC options use 525 kV 2 GW voltage source links, which would require a convertor station at each end similar in size to a large warehouse. A 6 GW connection would require three convertor stations at each end, to come close to matching the AC hi-capacity circuits of 6930 MVA.

Substation works

- New 25 bay 400 kV Gas Insulated Switchgear (GIS) substation near Creyke Beck accommodating 6 circuits and connections for new generation to remain compliant with NETS SQSS.
- 2 bay extension to the proposed new 400kV Air Insulated Switchgear (AIS) High Marnham Substation.

6.2.11 Table 6.1 sets out the capital costs for option ECO 1 considering substation works and the new circuit works for each technology option.

Table 6.1 – ECO 1 capital cost for each technology option

Item	Need	Capital cost			
Substation works	Facilitate generation and connect new circuits			£275.2m	
New circuits		**AC overhead line**	**AC cable**	**AC GIL**	**HVDC**
New circuit 85 km	New circuit across B8	£459m	£5,079.4m	£5,888.8m	£4,950.7m
Total capital cost		£734.2m	£5,354.6m	£6,164m	£5,225.9m

6.2.12 Table 6.2 sets out the lifetime cost for the new circuit technology options; the lifetime costs are different for each circuit technology and are included as a differentiator between technologies. These costs are calculated using the methodology described in Appendix D.

Table 6.2 – ECO 1 lifetime cost for each technology option

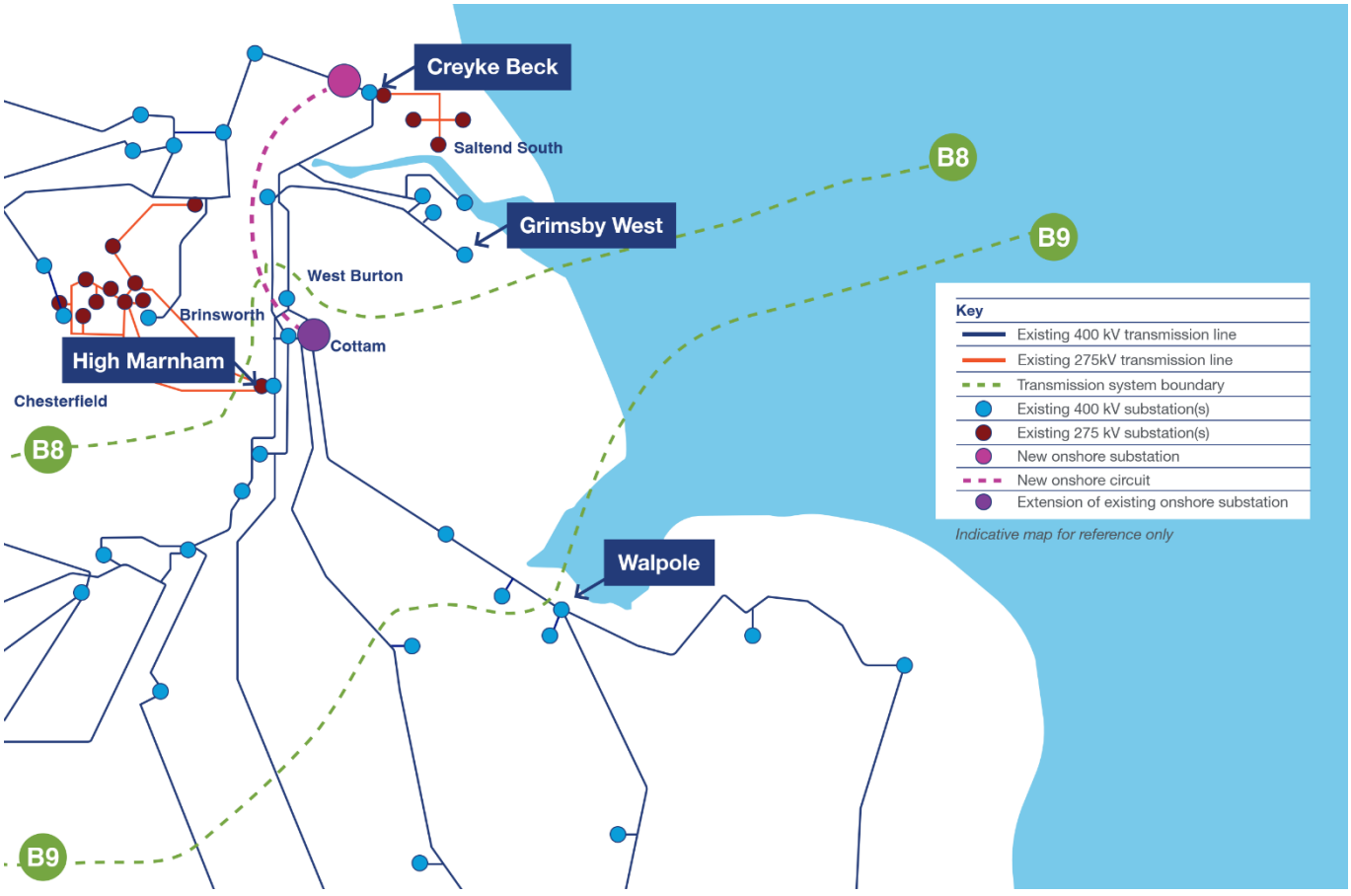
Land Based Option	AC overhead line	AC cable	AC GIL	HVDC
Capital cost of new circuits	£459m	£5,079.4m	£5,888.8m	£4,950.7m
NPV of cost of losses over 40 years	£238.4m	£174.9m	£110.7m	£471.2m
NPV of operation & maintenance costs over 40 years	£6.4m	£21m	£6.4m	£220.5m
Lifetime cost of new circuits	£704m	£5,275m	£6,006m	£5,642m

6.2.13 From the environmental and technical appraisal considered, alongside capital and circuit lifetime costs, the preferred option for ECO 1 is an 85 km connection between a new Creyke Beck substation and new High Marnham substation would be for an AC route to the west of Kingston Upon Hull and the Humber Estuary. In light of this analysis, our starting presumption for further development of this option should it be selected, would involve a wholly or largely overhead line connection.

6.3 Appraisal of strategic option ECO 2 – new Creyke Beck to Cottam

6.3.1 Option ECO 2 involves the construction of a new 400Kv transmission circuit connection between a new Creyke Beck substation to Cottam substation. There are two broad route options that have been considered, due to the need for any new infrastructure to avoid the major urban centre of Hull following a route to the west of the clear geographical obstacle of the Humber estuary with a route length of approximately 75 km as shown in Figure 6.2.

Figure 6.2 – ECO 2 - new Creyke Beck to Cottam



6.3.2 An environmental and socio-economic appraisal of the circuit connection has been undertaken. The appraisal is set out in Appendix G. A study area was established in which the project could reasonably be expected to be developed.

6.3.3 For the appraisal of onshore options of significant distance, an overhead line would normally be expected to offer the most economic, efficient, and co-ordinated development and would meet NGET's obligations under section 9 of the Electricity Act. Therefore, prior to consultation on any required mitigation the environmental and

socio-economic appraisal, which takes into consideration NGET's duty to have regard to the environment in Schedule 9, has sought to establish the impacts of the proposal based upon an assumed use of overhead line technology. This enables the appraisal to highlight areas of highest impact aiding discussions throughout the consultation stage of the project.

6.3.4 Overall, the ECO 2 option is relatively constrained in relation to both ecological, landscape and visual considerations. The overhead line would cross the Humber Estuary Special Protection Area (SPA), Special Area of Conservation (SAC), Ramsar and Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) with potential for direct effects on breeding, over-wintering and passage bird species (from collision risk) that are a qualifying feature of these designations. Whilst other ecologically designated sites including Thorne and Hatfield Moors SPA and Important Bird Area (IBA), Thorne Moor SAC, Hatfield Moor SAC, Hatfield Moors SSSI, Thorne, Crowle and Goole Moors SSSI, and Laughton Forest IBA are avoidable, there is the potential for adverse effects on the interest features (both habitats and species) for which a number of these sites are designated, depending on routeing. Any project would need to demonstrate that it would not affect the integrity of designated sites[21]. Based on the information available at this stage of the project's development, it is considered that a route could be identified at the routeing and siting stage that would not affect the integrity of designated sites (once appropriate mitigation was taken into account). The overhead line would also cross the Yorkshire Wolds Important Landscape Area (ILA). There would however be opportunities through more detailed routeing and design to prevent and/or reduce the potential for adverse effects. There is potential for adverse effects on the setting of Scheduled Monuments and listed buildings depending on the proximity of the new sealing end compound infrastructure required at Cottam. Other key environmental and socio-economic constraints are considered to be less influential with the potential to mitigate adverse impacts through careful consideration of routeing and siting and the use of appropriate technologies.

6.3.5 The key factors affecting ECO 2 are similar to ECO 1, however ECO 2 is approximately 10km shorter in length and would require cable sealing end compound infrastructure at Cottam. All Creyke Beck area generation group onshore options would need to cross the Humber Estuary SPA, Ramsar and SSSI with potential for direct effects on breeding, over-wintering and passage bird species (collision risk). In comparison to ECO 3 and ECO 4, ECO 2 is not located in proximity to The Wash Ramsar Site, SSSI, SPA, IBA and National Nature Reserve, The Wash and North Norfolk Coast IBA and SAC, or Gibraltar Point Ramsar Site and IBA. All Creyke Beck area generation group onshore options would need to cross the Yorkshire Wolds ILA, however ECO 2 would be located further from the Lincolnshire Wolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) in comparison to options ECO 3 and ECO 4. The nature of the environmental and socio-economics effects associated with the overhead line options (ECO 1, ECO 2, ECO 3 and ECO 4) including the associated substation infrastructure, would be different in nature to the subsea options which would comprise subsea cables, buried onshore cables and converter stations. With reference to internationally or nationally important sites, subsea options ECSS 1 (Lincolnshire) and ECSS 1 (Norfolk) would have challenges relating to the installation of buried cables across marine ecological designations. There are potential heritage constraints associated with the subsea options which may result in potential effects

[21] Or be able to demonstrate that there were no less damaging options and that there was an imperative need for the project which was of overriding public interest.

on the setting of a number of scheduled monuments and listed buildings dependent on converter station siting especially in the Creyke Beck area. Overall, on the basis of the information currently available and assuming that appropriate mitigation is undertaken, together with sensitive routing and siting, environmental and socio-economic factors are not considered to differentiate between onshore and offshore options for the purposes of option selection.

6.3.6 Alongside the environmental and socio-economic appraisal of the option a technical appraisal has established that a transmission connection between Creyke Beck and Cottam would satisfy the National Electricity Transmission System (NETS) Security and Quality of Supply Standards (SQSS) and resolve the requirement of providing generation group connections at Creyke Beck, whilst providing >6GW of capacity across the B8 boundary.

6.3.7 Technical analysis of this option includes the following:

- Construction risks at the site at Cottam are significant due to above and below ground infrastructure sited in the vicinity of the required connection, leading to significant routeing constraints. Alongside power station decommissioning works which could interact with the project.
- Due to Cottam being electrically further from significant demand, the boundary capability improvement at Cottam is lower than other options. It does not, therefore, offer as much system benefit compared to alternatives.

6.3.8 As set out in Chapter 5, we undertake a cost evaluation of the following four technologies for onshore options evaluation:

- 400 kV alternating current (AC) overhead line
- 400 kV AC underground cable
- 400 kV AC gas insulated line (GIL)
- 525 kV high voltage direct current (HVDC) underground cable and converter stations

6.3.9 Option ECO 2 requires the following transmission works to satisfy the requirements of the SQSS:

New circuit requirements

- AC connections options use hi-capacity double circuits (two 400 kV AC routes) with a total capacity of up to 6930 mega volt amperes (MVA); or
- HVDC using 525 kV 2GW voltage source links, which would require a convertor station at each end similar in size to a large warehouse. A 6 GW connection would require three convertor stations at each end; this is to come close to matching the AC hi-capacity circuits of 6930 MVA.

Substation works

- New 25 bay 400 kV Gas Insulated Switchgear (GIS) substation near Creyke Beck accommodating six circuits and connections for new generation to remain compliant with NETS SQSS.
- A 2-bay extension to the existing Cottam 400 kV substation and cable entries to the site for the new circuits to avoid existing infrastructure.

6.3.10 Table 6.3 below sets out the capital costs for option ECO 2 considering substation works and each technology option.

Table 6.3 – ECO 2 capital cost for each technology option

Item	Need	Capital cost			
Substation works	*Facilitate generation and connect new circuits*			*£335.6m*	
New circuits		**AC overhead line**	**AC cable**	**AC GIL**	**HVDC**
New circuit 75 km	New circuit across B8	£405m	£4,499.6m	£5,196m	£4,694.4m
Total capital cost		£740.6m	£4,835.2m	£5,531.6m	£5,030m

6.3.11 Table 6.4 below sets out the lifetime cost for the new circuit options; the lifetime costs are different for each circuit technology and are included as a differentiator between technologies. These costs are calculated using the methodology described in Appendix D.

Table 6.4 – ECO 2 lifetime cost for each technology option

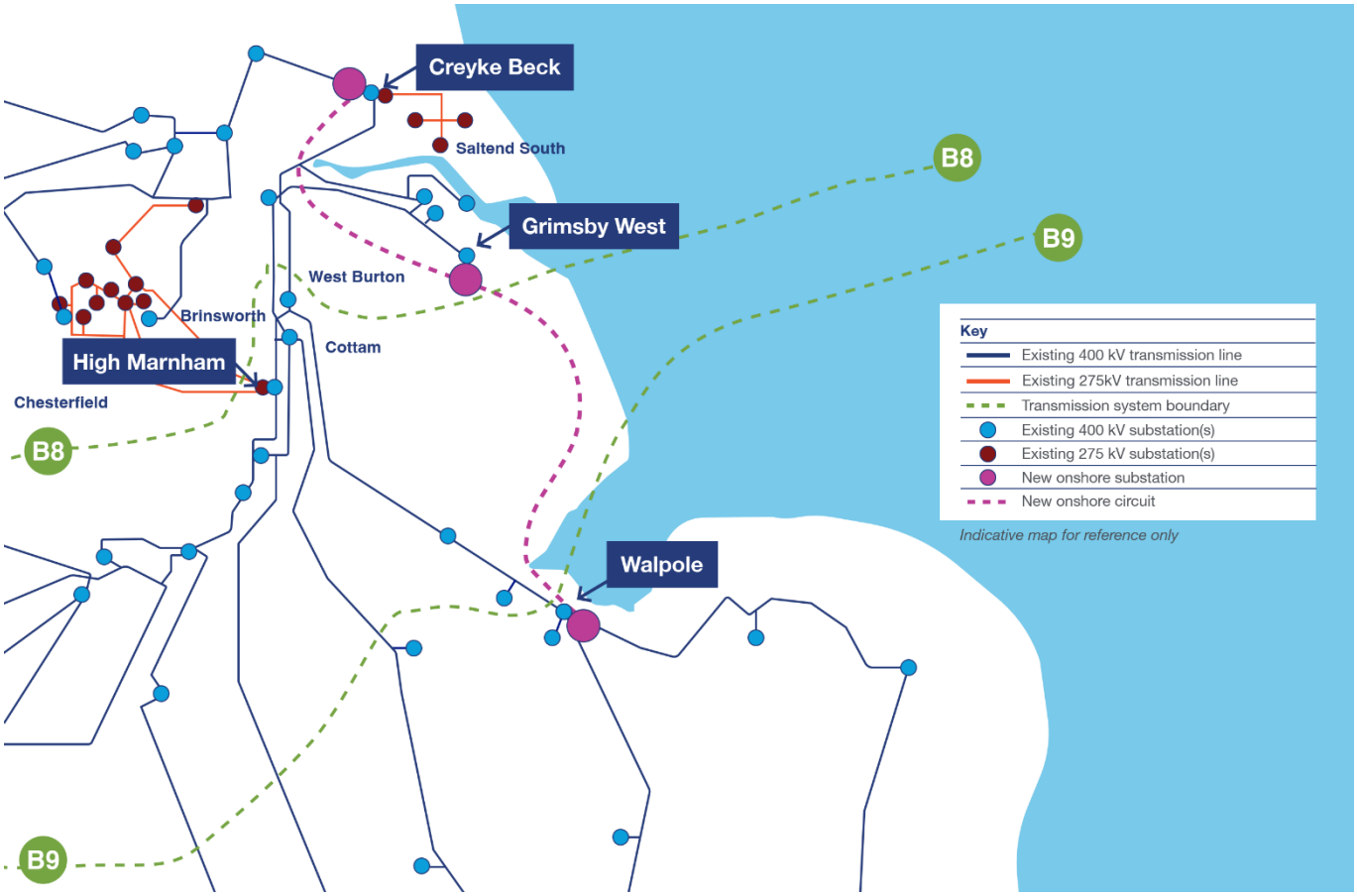
Land Based Option	AC overhead line	AC cable	AC GIL	HVDC
Capital cost of new circuits	£405m	£4,499.6m	£5,196.0m	£4,694.4m
NPV of cost of losses over 40 years	£210.4m	£157m	£97.7m	£471.2m
NPV of operation & maintenance costs over 40 years	£5.6m	£19.1m	£5.7m	£220.4m
Lifetime cost of new circuits	£621m	£4,676m	£5,299m	£5,386m

6.3.12 From the environmental and technical appraisal considered, alongside capital and circuit lifetime costs, the preferred option for ECO 2 is a 75 km connection between a new Creyke Beck substation and Cottam substation would be for an AC route to the west of Kingston Upon Hull and the Humber Estuary. In light of this analysis, our starting presumption for further development of this option should it be selected, would involve a wholly or largely overhead line connection.

6.4 Appraisal of strategic option ECO 3 – new Creyke Beck to new Grimsby West, new Grimsby West to new Walpole B

6.4.1 Option ECO 3 involves the connection of a new 400Kv transmission circuit connections between a new Creyke Beck substation to new Grimsby West substation and new Grimsby West to a new Walpole B substation following a route to the west of the clear geographical obstacle of the Humber Estuary, with a route length of approximately 225 km as shown in Figure 6.3 below.

Figure 6.3 – ECO 3 – new Creyke Beck to new Grimsby West, new Grimsby West to new Walpole



6.4.2 An environmental and socio-economic appraisal of the circuit connection has been undertaken. The appraisal is set out in Appendix G. A study area was established within which the project could reasonably be expected to be developed.

6.4.3 For the appraisal of onshore options of significant distance, an overhead line would normally be expected to offer the most economic, efficient, and co-ordinated development and would meet NGET's obligations under section 9 of the Electricity Act. Therefore, prior to consultation on any required mitigation, the environmental and socio-economic appraisal has sought to establish the impacts of the proposal based upon an assumed use of overhead line technology. This enables the appraisal to highlight areas of highest impact aiding discussions throughout the consultation stage of the project.

6.4.4 Overall, the ECO 3 option is relatively constrained in relation to both ecological, landscape and visual considerations. The overhead line would cross the Humber Estuary Special Protection Area (SPA), Special Area of Conservation (SAC), Ramsar

and Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) with potential for direct effects on breeding, over-wintering and passage bird species (collision risk) that are a qualifying feature of these designations. Whilst The Wash Ramsar Site, SSSI, SPA, Important Bird Area (IBA) and National Nature Reserve, The Wash and North Norfolk Coast IBA and SAC, and Gibraltar Point Ramsar Site and IBA are avoidable, there is the potential for adverse effects on the interest features (both habitats and species) for which a number of these sites are designated depending on routeing. Any project would need to demonstrate that it would not affect the integrity of designated sites[22]. Based on the information available at this stage of the project's development, it is considered that a route could be identified at the routeing and siting stage that would not affect the integrity of designated sites (once appropriate mitigation was taken into account). The overhead line would cross the Yorkshire Wolds Important Landscape Area (ILA). Although the Lincolnshire Wolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) would be avoided by the overhead line, there is potential for long-term effects on views from the AONB from the overhead line. There is potential for adverse effects on the setting of Brocklesby Park Registered Park and Garden as a result of the new overhead line, depending on routeing. There would however be opportunities through more detailed routeing and design to prevent and/or reduce the potential for adverse effects. Other key environmental and socio-economic constraints are considered to be less influential (noting the presence of Humberside Airport), with the potential to mitigate adverse impacts through careful consideration of routeing and siting and the use of appropriate technologies.

6.4.5 The key factors affecting ECO 3 are similar to ECO 4, however ECO 3 is approximately 35 km greater in length. All Creyke Beck area generation group onshore options would need to cross the Humber Estuary SPA, Ramsar and SSSI with potential for direct effects on breeding, over-wintering and passage bird species (from collision risk). In comparison to ECO 1 and ECO 2, ECO 3 is located in proximity to The Wash Ramsar Site, SSSI, SPA, IBA and National Nature Reserve, The Wash and North Norfolk Coast IBA and SAC, and Gibraltar Point Ramsar Site and IBA. All Creyke Beck area generation group onshore options would need to cross the Yorkshire Wolds ILA, however ECO 3 would also be located closer to the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB compared with options ECO 1 and ECO 2. The nature of the environmental and socio-economics effects associated with the overhead line options (ECO 1, ECO 2, ECO 3 and ECO 4), including the associated substation infrastructure, would be different in nature to the subsea options which would comprise subsea cables, buried onshore cables and converter stations. With reference to internationally or nationally important sites, subsea options ECSS 1 (Lincolnshire) and ECSS 1 (Norfolk) would have challenges relating to the installation of buried cables across marine ecological designations.

6.4.6 There are also potential heritage constraints associated with the subsea options which may result in potential effects on the setting of a number of scheduled monuments and listed buildings dependent on converter station siting especially in the Creyke Beck area. Overall, on the basis of the information currently available and assuming that appropriate mitigation is undertaken, together with sensitive routing and siting, environmental and socio-economic factors are not considered to differentiate between onshore and offshore options for the purposes of option selection.

[22] Or be able to demonstrate that there were no less damaging options and that there was an imperative need for the project which was of overriding public interest.

6.4.7 Alongside the environmental and socio-economic appraisal of the option a technical appraisal has established that a transmission connection between new Creyke Beck and new Walpole B via new Grimsby West would satisfy the NETS SQSS and resolve the requirement of providing generation group connections at Creyke Beck, whilst providing >6 GW of capacity across the B8 boundary.

6.4.8 Technical analysis of this option includes the following:

- This is a significantly longer alternative to provide connection capacity from Creyke Beck and would need to connect south from Grimsby West to the existing transmission system to provide the required 6 GW of capacity across B8.

6.4.9 As set out in Chapter 5, we undertake a cost evaluation of the following four technologies for onshore options evaluation:

- 400 kV alternating current (AC) overhead line
- 400 kV AC underground cable
- 400 kV AC gas insulated line (GIL)
- 525 kV HVDC underground cable and converter stations

6.4.10 Option ECO 3 requires the following transmission works to satisfy the requirements of the SQSS:

New circuit requirements

- AC connection options use hi-capacity double circuits (2 x 400kV AC routes) with a total capacity of up to 6930 mega volt amperes (MVA); or
- HVDC connection options use 525 kV 2 GW voltage source links, which would require a convertor station at each end, similar in size to a large warehouse. In this case a 6 GW three-ended connection would require three convertor stations at each substation (nine in total as there are three connection locations), this is to come close to matching the AC hi-capacity circuits of 6930 MVA.

Substation works

- 25 bay new Creyke Beck 400 kV Gas Insulated Switchgear (GIS) substation accommodating 6 circuits and connections for new generation to remain compliant with NETS SQSS.
- 19 bay new Grimsby West 400 kV substation replacing the existing substation to accommodate new circuits and existing circuits;
- 31 bay new Walpole B 400 kV substation to accommodate required new circuits.

6.4.11 Table 6.5 below sets out the capital costs for option ECO 3 considering substation works and each technology option.

Table 6.5 – ECO 3 capital cost for each technology option

Item	Need	Capital cost			
Substation works	Facilitate generation and connect new circuits	£745.3m			
New circuits		**AC overhead line**	**AC cable**	**AC GIL**	**HVDC**
New circuit 225 km	New circuit across B8	£1,215m	£13,581.6m	£15,588m	£9,925.2m
Total capital cost		£1,960.3m	£14,326.9m	£16,333.3m	£10,670.5m

6.4.12 Table 6.6 below sets out the lifetime cost for the new circuit options. The lifetime costs are different for each circuit technology and are included as a differentiator between technologies. These costs are calculated using the methodology described in Appendix D.

Table 6.6 – ECO 3 lifetime cost for each technology option

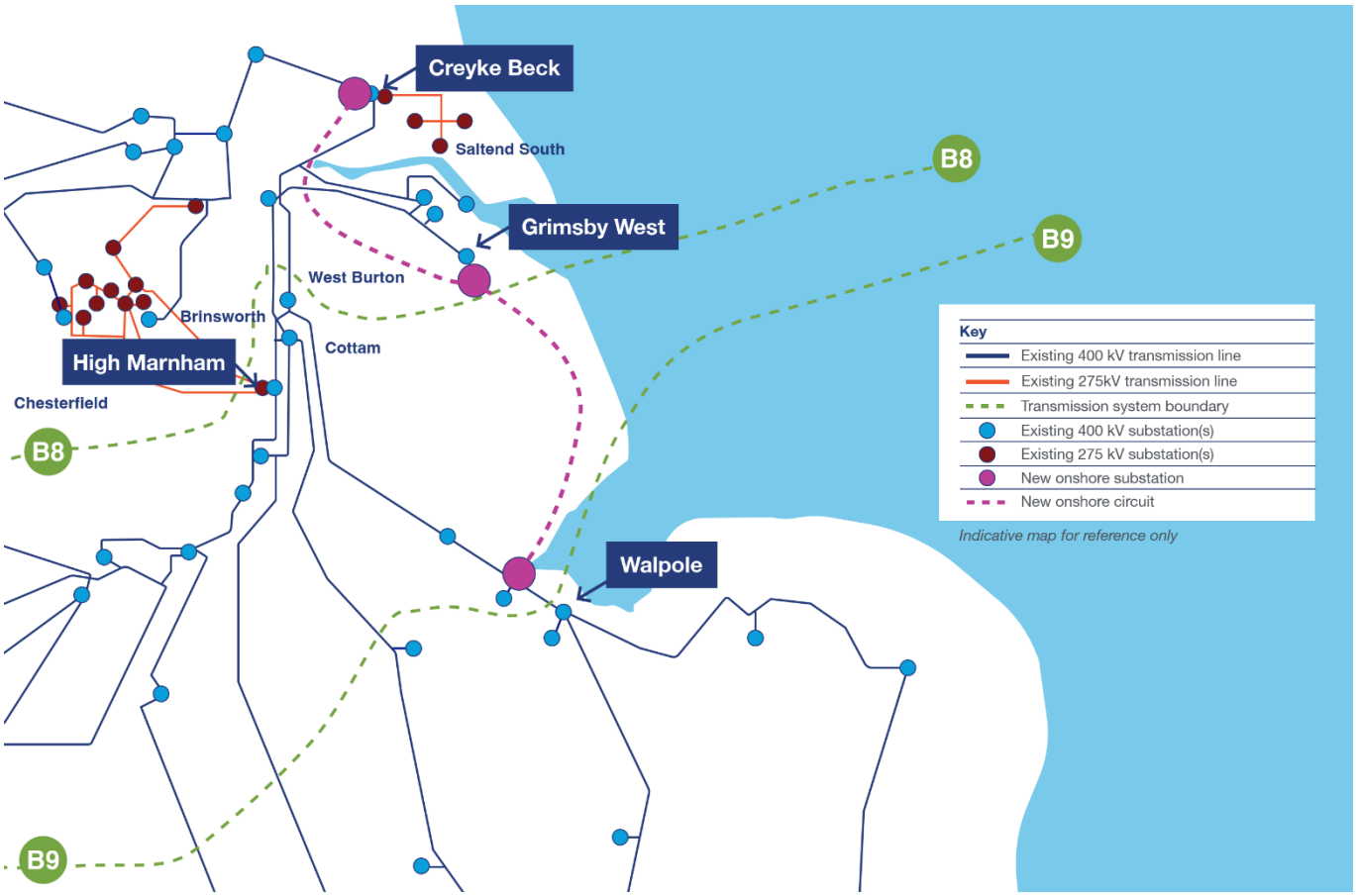
Land based option	AC overhead line	AC cable	AC GIL	HVDC
Capital cost of new circuits	£1,215m	£13,581.6m	£15,588m	£9,925.2m
NPV of cost of losses over 40 years	£631.2m	£489.5m	£293m	£706.9m
NPV of operation & maintenance costs over 40 years	£16.8m	£59.1m	£17m	£307.7m
Lifetime cost of new circuits	£1,863m	£14,130m	£15,898m	£10,940m

6.4.13 From the environmental and technical appraisal considered alongside capital and circuit lifetime costs the preferred option for ECO 3 is a 225 km connection between a new Creyke Beck substation and new Walpole B via new Grimsby West, would be for an AC route to the West of Kingston Upon Hull and the Humber estuary. In light of this analysis, our starting presumption for further development of this option should it be selected, would involve a wholly or largely overhead line connection.

6.5 Appraisal of strategic option ECO 4 – new Creyke Beck to new Grimsby West, new Grimsby West to new Weston Marsh substation(s)

6.5.1 Option ECO 4 involves the connection of a new 400Kv transmission circuit connections between a new Creyke Beck substation to new Grimsby West substation and new Grimsby West to new Weston Marsh substation(s), following a route to the west of the clear geographical obstacle of the Humber estuary with a route length of approximately 200 km as shown in Figure 6.4.

Figure 6.4 – ECO 4 – new Creyke Beck to new Grimsby West, new Grimsby West to new Weston Marsh substation(s)



6.5.2 An environmental and socio-economic appraisal of the circuit connection has been undertaken looking at both the East and West route alternatives for this option. The full appraisal is set out in Appendix G. A study area was established within which the project could reasonably be expected to be developed.

6.5.3 For the appraisal of onshore options of significant distance, an overhead line would normally be expected to offer the most economic, efficient, and co-ordinated development and would meet NGET's obligations under section 9 of the Electricity Act. Therefore, prior to consultation on any required mitigation, the environmental and socio-economic appraisal, which takes into consideration NGET's duty to have regard to the environment in Schedule 9, has sought to establish the impacts of the proposal based upon an assumed use of overhead line technology. This enables the appraisal to highlight areas of highest impact aiding discussions throughout the consultation stage of the project.

6.5.4 Overall, the ECO 4 option is relatively constrained in relation to both ecological, landscape and visual considerations. The overhead line would cross the Humber Estuary Special Protection Area (SPA), Special Area of Conservation (SAC), Ramsar and Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) with potential for direct effects on breeding, over-wintering and passage bird species (from collision risk) that are a qualifying feature of these designations. Whilst The Wash Ramsar Site, SSSI, SPA, Important Bird Area (IBA) and National Nature Reserve, The Wash and North Norfolk Coast IBA and SAC, and Gibraltar Point Ramsar Site and IBA are avoidable there is the potential for adverse effects on the interest features (both habitats and species) for which a number of these sites are designated, depending on routeing. Any project would need to demonstrate that it would not affect the integrity of designated sites[23]. Based on the information available at this stage of the project's development, it is considered that a route could be identified at the routeing and siting stage that would not affect the integrity of designated sites (once appropriate mitigation was taken into account). The overhead line would cross the Yorkshire Wolds Important Landscape Area (ILA). Although the Lincolnshire Wolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) would be avoided by the overhead line, there is potential for long-term effects on views from the AONB from the overhead line. There is potential for adverse effects on the setting of Brocklesby Park Registered Park and Garden as a result of the new overhead line, depending on routeing. There is potential for long term landscape and visual effects due to the introduction of new substation infrastructure at Weston Marsh (assumed to be at a location close to the existing 4ZM route, however exact location subject to routing / siting) in a landscape which currently has little major development. There will however be opportunities through more detailed routeing and design to prevent and/or reduce the potential for adverse effects. Other key environmental and socio-economic constraints are considered to be less influential (noting the presence of Humberside Airport), with the potential to mitigate adverse impacts through careful consideration of routeing and siting and the use of appropriate technologies.

6.5.5 The key factors affecting ECO 4 are similar to ECO 3, however ECO 4 is approximately 35 km shorter in length. All Creyke Beck area generation group onshore options would need to cross the Humber Estuary SPA, Ramsar and SSSI, with potential for direct effects on breeding, over-wintering and passage bird species (collision risk). In comparison to ECO 1 and ECO 2, ECO 4 is located in proximity to The Wash Ramsar Site, SSSI, SPA, IBA and National Nature Reserve, The Wash and North Norfolk Coast IBA and SAC, and Gibraltar Point Ramsar Site and IBA. All Creyke Beck area generation group onshore options would need to cross the Yorkshire Wolds ILA, however ECO 4 would also be located closer to the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB compared with options ECO 1 and ECO 2. The nature of the environmental and socio-economics effects associated with the overhead line options (ECO 1, ECO 2, ECO 3 and ECO 4) including the associated substation infrastructure, would be different in nature to the subsea options which would comprise subsea cables, buried onshore cables and converter stations. With reference to internationally or nationally important sites, subsea options ECSS 1 (Lincolnshire) and ECSS 1 (Norfolk) would have challenges relating to the installation of buried cables across marine ecological designations. There are also potential heritage constraints associated with the subsea options which may result in potential effects on the setting of a number of scheduled monuments and listed buildings dependent on converter station siting especially in the Creyke Beck area. Overall, on

[23] Or be able to demonstrate that there were no less damaging options and that there was an imperative need for the project which was of overriding public interest.

the basis of the information currently available and assuming that appropriate mitigation is undertaken, together with sensitive routing and siting, environmental and socio-economic factors are not considered to differentiate between onshore and offshore options for the purposes of option selection.

6.5.6 Alongside the environmental and socio-economic appraisal of the option a technical appraisal has established that a transmission connection between Creyke Beck and Weston Marsh via Grimsby West would satisfy the NETS SQSS and resolve the requirement of providing generation group connections at Creyke Beck, whilst providing >6 GW of capacity across the B8 boundary.

6.5.7 Technical analysis of this option includes the following:

- This is a significantly longer alternative to provide connection capacity from Creyke Beck and would need to connect south from Grimsby West to the existing transmission system to provide the required 6 GW of capacity across B8.

6.5.8 As set out in Chapter 5, we undertake a cost evaluation of the following four technologies for onshore options evaluation:

- 400 kV alternating current (AC) overhead line
- 400 kV AC underground cable
- 400 kV AC gas insulated line (GIL)
- 525 kV HVDC underground cable and converter stations

6.5.9 Option ECO 4 requires the following transmission works to satisfy the requirements of the SQSS:

New circuit requirements

- AC connection options use hi-capacity double circuits (two 400 kV AC routes) with a total capacity of up to 6930 mega volt amperes (MVA); or
- HVDC connections use 525 kV 2 GW voltage source links, which would require a converter station at each end, similar in size to a large warehouse. In this case a 6 GW three-ended connection would require three convertor stations at each substation (nine in total as there are three connection locations), to come close to matching the AC hi-capacity circuits of 6930 MVA.

Substation works

- New 25 bay 400 kV Gas Insulated Switchgear (GIS) substation near Creyke Beck accommodating six circuits and connections for new generation to remain compliant with NETS SQSS.
- A new 14 bay 400 kV substation at Grimsby West replacing the existing substation to accommodate new circuits and existing circuits.
- New Weston Marsh substation(s); Weston Marsh A – a new 20 bay 400 kV substation & Weston Marsh B – a new 14 bay 400 kV substation to connect new & existing circuits, as well as new generation.

6.5.10 Table 6.7 below sets out the capital costs for option ECO 4 considering substation works and each technology option.

Table 6.7 – ECO 4 capital cost for each technology option

Item	Need	Capital cost			
Substation works	Facilitate generation and connect new circuits	£1,088.6m			
New circuits		**AC overhead line**	**AC cable**	**AC GIL**	**HVDC**
New circuit 200 km	New circuit across B8	£1,080m	£12,063.2m	£13,856m	£9,284.4m
Total capital cost		£2,168.6m	£13,151.8m	£14,944.6m	£10,373m

6.5.11 Table 6.8 below sets out the lifetime cost for the new circuit options; the lifetime costs are different for each circuit technology and are included as a differentiator between technologies. These costs are calculated using the methodology described in Appendix D.

Table 6.8 – ECO 4 lifetime cost for each technology option

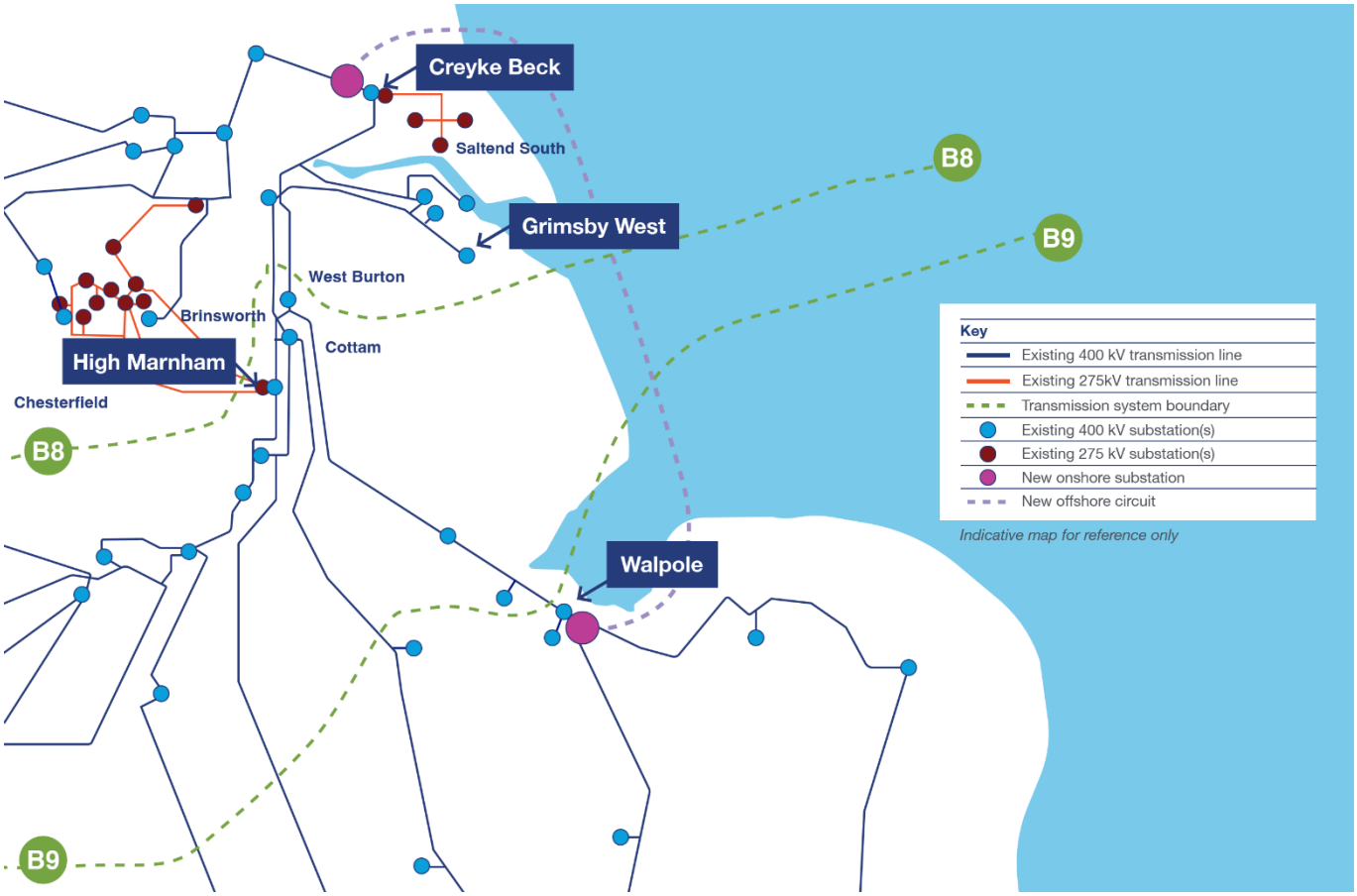
Land Based Option	AC overhead line	AC Cable	AC GIL	HVDC
Capital cost of new circuits	£1,080m	£12,063.2m	£13,856m	£9,284.4m
NPV of cost of losses over 40 years	£561m	£431m	£260.5m	£706.9m
NPV of operation & maintenance costs over 40 years	£14.9m	£52.5m	£15.1m	£307.5m
Lifetime Cost of New Circuits	£1,656m	£12,547m	£14,132m	£10,299m

6.5.12 From the environmental and technical appraisal considered alongside capital and circuit lifetime costs, the preferred option for ECO 4, 200 km connection between a new Creyke Beck substation and Weston Marsh via Grimsby West, would be for an AC route to the west of Kingston Upon Hull and the Humber estuary. In light of this analysis our starting presumption for further development of this option should it be selected, would involve a wholly or largely overhead line connection.

6.6 Appraisal of strategic option ECSS 1 –new Creyke Beck to new Walpole B subsea

6.6.1 Option ECSS 1 involves the construction of a new 400kV subsea transmission circuit connection between a new Creyke Beck substation to a new Walpole B substation. This follows a route to the east coast, offshore along the east coast, to a new onshore Walpole substation, with a length of approximately 195 km, as shown in Figure 6.5.

Figure 6.5 – ECSS 1 - new Creyke Beck to new Walpole B subsea



6.6.2 An environmental and socio-economic appraisal of the circuit connection has been undertaken looking at Norfolk landfall and Lincolnshire landfall alternatives for this option. The appraisal is set out in Appendix G.

6.6.3 For the appraisal of subsea options of significant distance, a HVDC option would normally be expected to offer the most economic, efficient, and co-ordinated development and would meet NGET's obligations under section 9 of the Electricity Act. Therefore, prior to consultation on any required mitigation the environmental and socio-economic appraisal, which takes into consideration NGET's duty to have regard to the environment in Schedule 9, has sought to establish the potential impacts of the proposal based upon high voltage direct current (HVDC) technology in a marine environment. This enables the appraisal to highlight areas of highest impact aiding discussions throughout the consultation stage of the project.

6.6.4 Overall, the ECSS 1 option with a Norfolk landfall is constrained in relation to ecological considerations. The Holderness Inshore Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ) and The Greater Wash Special Protection Area (SPA) are within the study area. It is acknowledged that the study area could be extended further north to avoid a crossing of the Holderness MCZ, however this would extend the overall cable length and potentially require a crossing of the Holderness Offshore MCZ or the Southern North Sea Special Area of Conservation (SAC). Also, due to the number and proximity of designated sites along the north Norfolk coast including Cromer Shoal Chalk Beds MCZ, The Wash and North Norfolk Coast SAC, Holkham National Nature Reserve, and North Norfolk Coast Ramsar, Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and Important Bird Area (IBA), it would not be possible to avoid all of these designated areas. The potential for likely significant effects on designated sites would need to be considered in relation to the Habitats Directive. There are also potential heritage constraints which may result in potential effects on the setting of a number of scheduled monuments and listed buildings, dependent on converter station siting, especially in the Creyke Beck area. Other key environmental and socio-economic constraints are considered to be less influential, with the potential to mitigate adverse impacts through careful consideration of routeing and siting and the use of appropriate technologies.

6.6.5 Overall, the ECSS 1 option with a Lincolnshire landfall option is less constrained than ECSS 1 with a Norfolk landfall in relation to ecological considerations. The Holderness Inshore MCZ and The Greater Wash SPA are within the study area and would require cable crossings. It is acknowledged that the study area could be extended further north to avoid a crossing of the Holderness MCZ, however this would extend the overall cable length, and potentially require a crossing of the Holderness Offshore MCZ.

6.6.6 Designated sites along the Lincolnshire coastline are potentially avoidable, subject to landfall selection and subsea cable installation methods. The potential for likely significant effects on designated sites would need to be considered in relation to the Habitats Directive. There are also potential heritage constraints which may result in potential effects on the setting of a number of scheduled monuments and listed buildings, dependent on converter station siting, especially in the Creyke Beck area. Other key environmental and socio-economic constraints are considered to be less influential, with the potential to mitigate adverse impacts through careful consideration of routeing and siting and the use of appropriate technologies.

6.6.7 The ECSS 1 option with a Lincolnshire landfall is approximately 60 km shorter in length than ECSS 1 with a Norfolk landfall. Both of the Creyke Beck area generation group subsea options, ECSS 1 (Lincolnshire) and ECSS 1 (Norfolk), would result in direct effects on the Greater Wash SPA and Holderness Inshore MCZ which are located within the study area. It is acknowledged that the study area could be extended further north to avoid a crossing of the Holderness MCZ, however this would extend the overall cable length and potentially require a crossing of the Holderness Offshore MCZ or the Southern North Sea Special SAC.

6.6.8 ECSS 1 (Lincolnshire) would avoid direct effects on designated sites along the north Norfolk coast, which would be unavoidable for ECSS 1 (Norfolk). However, ECSS 1 (Lincolnshire) may result in potential for effects on designated sites located along the Lincolnshire coast, including Humber Estuary SAC, SPA, Ramsar site and SSSI, Saltfleet-by-Theddlethorpe Dunes and Gibraltar Point SAC, and Saltfleet-by-Theddlethorpe Sand Dunes SSSI at the landfall, depending on routeing. Both the ECSS 1 (Norfolk) and ECSS 1 (Lincolnshire) options would involve sections of

undergrounded cable and above-ground infrastructure (converter stations). The nature of the environmental and socio-economic effects associated with the subsea options would be different in nature to the overhead line options (ECO 1, ECO 2, ECO 3 and ECO 4) for a number of environmental and socio-economic topics.

6.6.9 Overall, on the basis of the information currently available and assuming that appropriate mitigation is undertaken, together with sensitive routing and siting, environmental and socio-economic factors are not considered to differentiate between onshore and offshore options for the purposes of option selection.

6.6.10 Alongside the environmental and socio-economic appraisal of the option, a technical appraisal has established that a subsea transmission connection between a new Creyke Beck substation and a new Walpole B substation would satisfy the National Electricity Transmission System Security and Quality of Supply Standard (NETS SQSS) and resolve the requirement of providing generation group connections at Creyke Beck, whilst providing >6 GW of capacity across the B8 boundary.

6.6.11 Technical analysis of this option includes the following:

- This is a significantly longer alternative to provide connection capacity from Creyke Beck and seeks to connect to a location south of the B9 boundary in the Walpole area. For the purposes of assessing costs, we have used the Lincolnshire landfall for indicative purposes, as it is the shortest route.
- The offshore options considered for option ECSS 1 offer no technical advantage over options considered for onshore alternatives. Both onshore and offshore, AC and HVDC alternatives considered offer NETS SQSS compliant solutions that meet the need case. Each technology considered within an option can be designed to provide the required system performance and capacity albeit with different characteristics. The only delivery advantage offered by offshore cable installation compared to onshore is the ability to carry significant lengths of cable on a large vessel for deployment. Allowing cable laying campaigns of up 100km carried by a single vessel, whereas cables laid on land need to be deployed in drum lengths of circa 1km for delivery to site.

6.6.12 As set out in Chapter 5, we undertook a cost evaluation of the following two technologies for subsea options evaluation:

- 400 kV alternative current (AC) subsea cable
- 525 kV HVDC subsea cable and converter stations

6.6.13 Option ECSS 1 requires the following transmission works to satisfy the requirements of the SQSS:

New Circuit requirements

- AC subsea connections circuit options use hi-capacity double circuits (2 x 400 kV AC routes) with a total capacity of up to 6930 mega volt amperes (MVA); or
- HVDC subsea options use 525 kV 2 GW voltage source links, which would require a convertor station at each end similar in size to a large warehouse. A 6 GW connection would require three convertor stations at each end, to come close to matching the AC hi-capacity circuits of 6930 MVA.

Substation works

- 25 bay new Creyke Beck 400 kV Gas Insulated Switchgear (GIS) substation accommodating 6 circuits and connections for new generation to remain compliant with NETS SQSS.
- 31 bay new Walpole B 400 kV substation to accommodate required new circuits.

6.6.14 Table 6.9 below sets out the capital costs for option ECSS 1 considering substation works and each technology option.

Table 6.9 – ECSS 1 capital cost for each technology option

Item	Need	Capital cost	
Substation works	Facilitate generation and connect new circuits	£530.8m	
New circuits		**AC subsea cable**	**Subsea HVDC cable**
New circuit 195 km	New circuit across B8 and B9	£11,787.2m	£6,809m
Total capital cost		£12,318m	£7,339.8m

6.6.15 Table 6.10 below sets out the lifetime cost for the new circuit options; the lifetime costs are different for each circuit technology and are included as a differentiator between technologies. These costs are calculated using the methodology described in Appendix D.

Table 6.10 – ECSS 1 lifetime cost for each technology option

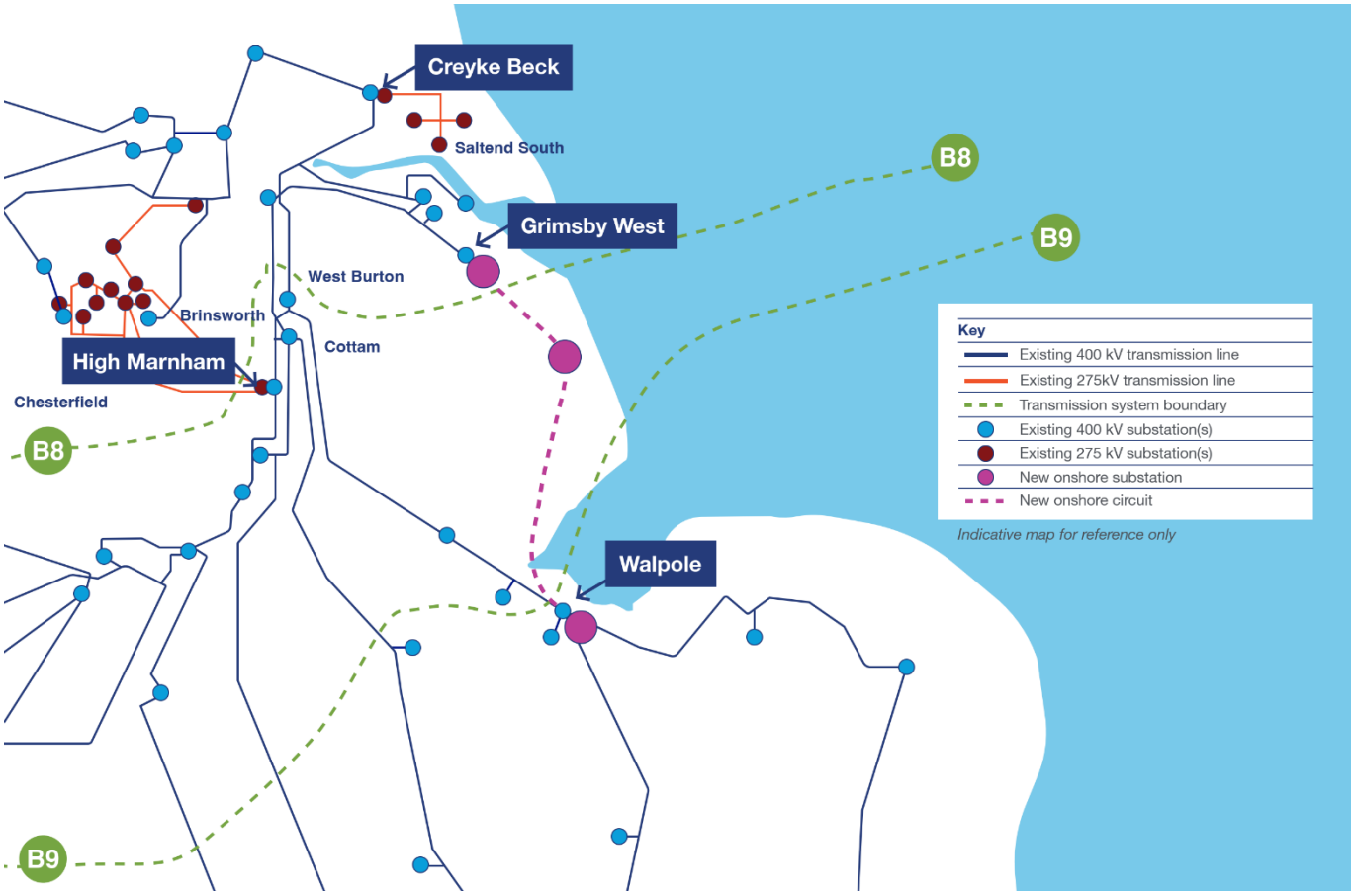
Subsea based option	AC subsea Cable	Subsea HVDC Cable
Capital cost of new circuits	£11,787.2m	£6,809.0m
Net present value (NPV) of Cost of Losses over 40 years	£426.7m	£471.2m
NPV of operation & maintenance costs over 40 years	£51.7m	£221.8m
Lifetime cost of new circuits	£12,266m	£7,502m

6.6.16 From the environmental and technical appraisal considered, alongside capital and circuit lifetime costs, the preferred option for ECSS 1 is a 195km connection between a new Creyke Beck substation and new Walpole B substation, this would be for a 6GW HVDC subsea option to the east of Kingston Upon Hull. In light of this analysis, our starting presumption for further development of this option, should it be selected, would involve a largely HVDC subsea connection.

6.7 Appraisal of Strategic Option ECO 5 – new Grimsby West to new Lincolnshire Connection substation(s), new Lincolnshire Connection substation(s) to new Walpole

6.7.1 Option ECO 5 involves the connection of a new 400Kv transmission circuit connections between a new Grimsby West substation to new Lincolnshire Connections substation(s), and Lincolnshire Connections substation(s) to a new Walpole B substation following a route through Lincolnshire, with a route length of approximately 140km as shown in Figure 6.6.

Figure 6.6 – ECO 5 - new Grimsby West to new Lincolnshire Connection substation(s), new Lincolnshire Connection substation(s) to new Walpole



6.7.2 An environmental and socio-economic appraisal of the circuit connection has been undertaken for this option. The appraisal is set out in Appendix G.

6.7.3 For the appraisal of onshore options of significant distance, an overhead line would normally be expected to offer the most economic, efficient, and co-ordinated development and would meet NGET's obligations under section 9 of the Electricity Act. Therefore, prior to consultation on any required mitigation, the environmental and socio-economic appraisal, which takes into consideration NGET's duty to have regard to the environment in Schedule 9, has sought to establish the impacts of the proposal based upon an assumed use of overhead line technology. This enables the appraisal to highlight areas of highest impact aiding discussions throughout the consultation stage of the project.

6.7.4 Overall ECO 5 is relatively constrained in relation to both ecological, and landscape visual considerations. Whilst the Humber Estuary Special Area of Conservation (SAC), Special Protection Area (SPA), Ramsar site and Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), The Wash Ramsar Site, SSSI, SPA, Important Bird Area (IBA) and National Nature Reserve, The Wash and North Norfolk Coast IBA and SAC, and Gibraltar Point Ramsar Site and IBA are avoidable, there is the potential for adverse effects on the interest features (both habitats and species) for which a number of these sites are designated, depending on routeing. Any project would need to demonstrate that it would not affect the integrity of designated sites[24]. Based on the information available at this stage of the project's development, it is considered that a route could be identified at the routeing and siting stage that would not affect the integrity of designated sites (once appropriate mitigation was taken into account). Although the Lincolnshire Wolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) would be avoided by the overhead line, there is potential for long-term effects on views from the AONB, from both the overhead line and substation infrastructure at the Lincolnshire Connection substation(s). There is potential for long term landscape and visual effects due to the introduction of new substation infrastructure, particularly at the Lincolnshire Connection substation(s) in a landscape which currently has little major development. There would however be opportunities through more detailed routeing and design to prevent and/or reduce the potential for adverse effects. Other key environmental and socio-economic constraints are considered to be less influential with the potential to mitigate adverse impacts through careful consideration of routeing and siting and the use of appropriate technologies.

6.7.5 Compared to the remaining East Coast generation group connections, the key factors affecting ECO 5 are similar to ECO 6, however ECO 6 would require additional substation(s) at Weston Marsh. The nature of the environmental and socio-economics effects associated with the overhead line options (ECO 5 and ECO 6) including the associated substation infrastructure, would be different in nature to the subsea option (ECSS 2) which would comprise subsea cables, buried onshore cables and converter stations. With reference to internationally or nationally important sites, subsea option ECSS 2 would have challenges relating to the installation of buried cables across marine ecological designations. These would include temporary effects on the Greater Wash SPA which would require a cable crossing, as well as the potential for temporary effects on designated sites along the north Norfolk coast as it would not be possible to avoid all designated areas. There are potential heritage constraints which may result in potential effects on the setting of a number of scheduled monuments and listed buildings depending on converter station siting at Grimsby West. Overall, on the basis of the information currently available and assuming that appropriate mitigation is undertaken, together with sensitive routing and siting, environmental and socio-economic factors are not considered to differentiate between onshore and offshore options for the purposes of option selection.

6.7.6 Alongside the environmental and socio-economic appraisal of the option a technical appraisal has established that a transmission connection between new Grimsby West and new Walpole B via new Lincolnshire Connection substation(s) would satisfy the National Electricity Transmission System Security and Quality of Supply Standard (NETS SQSS) and resolve the requirement of providing generation group

[24] Or be able to demonstrate that there were no less damaging options and that there was an imperative need for the project which was of overriding public interest.

connections for Lincolnshire coastal connections, whilst providing >6 GW of capacity across the B8 and B9 boundaries.

6.7.7 Technical analysis of this option includes the following:

- This option provides connection locations for all generation connecting between the South of the Humber Estuary and North of the Wash. It also facilities boundary capacity across the B8 and B9 Boundaries.
- This option requires that the configuration of the circuits connecting to existing Walpole and new Walpole B allow transfer south of the B9 boundary, even under secured fault conditions.

6.7.8 As set out in Chapter 5, we undertook a cost evaluation of the following four technologies for onshore options evaluation:

- 400 kV alternating current (AC) overhead Line
- 400 kV AC underground cable
- 400 kV AC gas insulated line (GIL)
- 525 kV high voltage direct current (HVDC) underground cable

6.7.9 Option ECO 5 requires the following transmission works to satisfy the requirements of the SQSS:

New Circuit requirements

- AC connections circuit options use hi-capacity double circuits (two 400 kV AC routes) with a total capacity of up to 6930 mega volt amperes (MVA); or
- HVDC connection options use 525 kV 2 GW voltage source links, which would require a convertor station at each end, similar in size to a large warehouse. In this case a 6 GW three-ended connection would require three convertor stations at each substation (nine in total as there are three connection locations), this is to come close to matching the AC hi-capacity circuits of 6930 MVA.

Substation works

- 19 bay new Grimsby West 400 kV substation replacing the existing substation to accommodate new circuits and existing circuits.
- New Lincolnshire Connection substation(s) (LCS): LCS A – a new 17 bay 400 kV substation & LCS B - a new 19 bay 400 kV substation.
- 31 bay new Walpole B 400 kV substation to accommodate required new circuits.

6.7.10 Table 6.11 below sets out the capital costs for option ECO 5 considering substation works and each technology option.

Table 6.11 – ECO 5 capital costs for each technology option

Item	Need	Capital cost			
Substation Works	Facilitate generation and connect new circuits	£737.5m			
New circuits		**AC overhead line**	**AC Cable**	**AC GIL**	**HVDC**
New circuit 140km	New circuit across B8 and B9	£756m	£8,419.4m	£9,699.2m	£7,746.5m
Total capital cost		£1,493.5m	£9,156.9m	£10,436.7m	£8,484.0m

6.7.11 Table 6.12 below sets out the lifetime cost for the new circuit options; the lifetime costs are different for each circuit technology and are included as a differentiator between technologies. These costs are calculated using the methodology described in Appendix D.

Table 6.12 – ECO 5 lifetime cost for each technology option

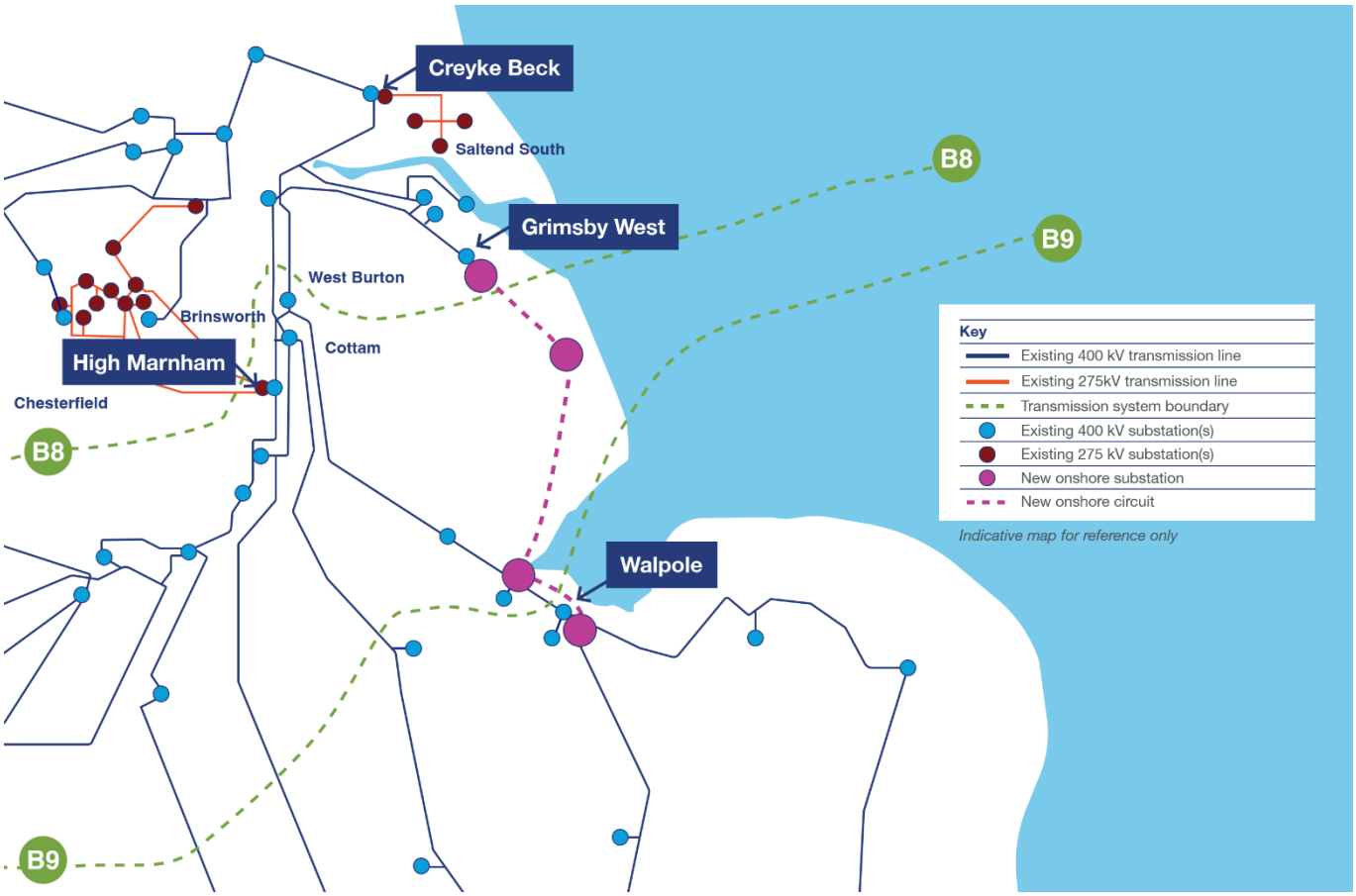
Land Based option	AC Overhead line	AC Cable	AC GIL	HVDC
Capital cost of new circuits	£756m	£8,419.4m	£9,699.2m	£7,746.5m
Net Present Value (NPV) of cost of losses over 40 years	£392.7m	£296.2m	£182.3m	£706.9m
NPV of operation & maintenance costs over 40 years	£10.5m	£36.2m	£10.6m	£306.8m
Lifetime cost of new circuits	£1,159m	£8,752m	£9,892m	£8,760m

6.7.12 From the environmental and technical appraisal considered alongside capital and circuit lifetime costs the preferred option for ECO 5 is a 140km connection between a New Grimsby West to New Walpole B via New Lincolnshire Connection Substation(s), would be for an AC route through Lincolnshire. In light of this analysis our starting presumption for further development of this option should it be selected, would involve a wholly or largely overhead line connection, with a fully defined proposal being subject to the Defined proposal and Statutory Consultation stage as defined in “Our Approach to Consenting”.

6.8 Appraisal of Strategic Option ECO 6 – new Grimsby West to new Lincolnshire Connection substation(s), new Lincolnshire Connection substation(s) via new Weston Marsh substation(s) to new Walpole

6.8.1 Option ECO 6 involves the connection of new 400Kv transmission circuit connections between a new Grimsby West substation to new Lincolnshire Connection substation(s), and new Lincolnshire Connection substation(s) to a new Walpole B substation via a new Weston Marsh substation(s) following a route through Lincolnshire, with a route length of approximately 140km as shown in Figure 6.7.

Figure 6.7 – ECO 6 - new Grimsby West to new Lincolnshire Connection substation(s), new Lincolnshire Connection substation(s) via new Weston Marsh substation(s) to new Walpole



6.8.2 An environmental and socio-economic appraisal of the circuit connection has been undertaken for this option. The appraisal is set out in Appendix G.

6.8.3 For the appraisal of onshore options of significant distance, an overhead line would normally be expected to offer the most economic, efficient, and co-ordinated development and would meet NGET's obligations under section 9 of the Electricity Act. Therefore, prior to consultation on any required mitigation the environmental and socio-economic appraisal, which takes into consideration NGET's duty to have regard to the environment in Schedule 9, has sought to establish the impacts of the proposal based upon overhead line technology. This enables the appraisal to highlight areas of highest impact aiding discussions throughout the consultation stage of the project.

6.8.4 Overall, ECO 6 is relatively constrained in relation to both ecological, landscape and visual considerations. Whilst the Humber Estuary Special Area of Conservation (SAC), Special Protection Area (SPA), Ramsar site and Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), The Wash Ramsar Site, SSSI, SPA, Important Bird Area (IBA) and National Nature Reserve, The Wash and North Norfolk Coast IBA and SAC, and Gibraltar Point Ramsar Site and IBA are avoidable, there is the potential for adverse effects on the interest features (both habitats and species) for which a number of these sites are designated, depending on routeing. Any project would need to demonstrate that it would not affect the integrity of designated sites[25]. Based on the information available at this stage of the project's development, it is considered that a route could be identified at the routeing and siting stage that would not affect the integrity of designated sites (once appropriate mitigation was taken into account). Although the Lincolnshire Wolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) would be avoided by the overhead line, there is potential for long-term effects on views from the AONB, from both the overhead line and substation infrastructure at the Lincolnshire Connection substation(s). There is potential for long term landscape and visual effects due to the introduction of new substation infrastructure, particularly at the Lincolnshire Connection substation(s) sites and at Weston Marsh in a landscape which currently has little major development. There would however be opportunities through more detailed routeing and design to prevent and/or reduce the potential for adverse effects. Other key environmental and socio-economic constraints are considered to be less influential with the potential to mitigate adverse impacts through careful consideration of routeing and siting and the use of appropriate technologies.

6.8.5 Compared to the remaining East Coast generation group connections, the key factors affecting ECO 6 are similar to ECO 5, however ECO 6 would include additional substation infrastructure at Weston Marsh which would result in a number of additional environmental and socio-economic effects compared with ECO 5. The nature of the environmental and socio-economics effects associated with the overhead line options (ECO 5 and ECO 6) including the associated substation infrastructure, would be different in nature to the subsea option (ECSS 2) which would comprise subsea cables, buried onshore cables and converter stations. With reference to internationally or nationally important sites, subsea option ECSS 2 would have challenges relating to the installation of buried cables across marine ecological designations. These would include temporary effects on the Greater Wash SPA which would require a cable crossing, as well as the potential for temporary effects on designated sites along the north Norfolk coast as it would not be possible to avoid all designated areas. There are potential heritage constraints which may result in potential effects on the setting of a number of scheduled monuments and listed buildings depending on converter station siting at Grimsby West. Overall, on the basis of the information currently available and assuming that appropriate mitigation is undertaken, together with sensitive routing and siting, environmental and socio-economic factors are not considered to differentiate between onshore and offshore options for the purposes of option selection.

6.8.6 Alongside the environmental and socio-economic appraisal of the option a technical appraisal has established that a transmission connection between new Grimsby West and new Walpole B via new Lincolnshire Connection Substation(s) and Weston Marsh would satisfy the National Electricity Transmission System Security and

[25] Or be able to demonstrate that there were no less damaging options and that there was an imperative need for the project which was of overriding public interest.

Quality of Supply Standard (NETS SQSS), and resolve the requirement of providing generation group connections for Lincolnshire coastal connections, whilst providing >6 GW of capacity across the B8 and B9 boundaries.

6.8.7 Technical analysis of this option includes the following:

- This option provides connections locations for all generation connecting between the south of the Humber Estuary and north of the Wash. It also facilities boundary capacity across the B8 and B9 Boundaries.
- This option assumes a circuit is constructed from Weston Marsh to Walpole and Walpole remains the Main Interconnected Transmission System (MITS) substation with more than 4 circuits, connecting it to the system to ensure, even under secured faults, transfer south of the B9 boundary continues.

6.8.8 As set out in Chapter 5, we undertook a cost evaluation of the following four technologies for onshore options evaluation:

- 400 kV alternating current (AC) overhead Line
- 400 kV AC underground cable
- 400 kV AC gas insulated line (GIL)
- 525 kV high voltage direct current (HVDC) underground cable

6.8.9 Option ECO 6 requires the following transmission works to satisfy the requirements of the SQSS:

New Circuit requirements

- AC connections circuit options use hi-capacity double circuits (two 400 kV AC routes) with a total capacity of up to 6930 mega volt amperes (MVA); or
- HVDC connection options use 525 kV 2 GW voltage source links, which would require a convertor station at each end, similar in size to a large warehouse. In this case a 6 GW three-ended connection would require three convertor stations at each substation (nine in total as there are three connection locations), this is to come close to matching the AC hi-capacity circuits of 6930 MVA.

Substation works

- 19 bay new Grimsby West 400 kV substation replacing the existing substation to accommodate new circuits and existing circuits.
- New Lincolnshire Connection substation(s) (LCS): LCS A – a new 17 bay 400 kV substation & LCS B - a new 19 bay 400 kV substation.
- New Weston Marsh substation(s); Weston Marsh A – a new 20 bay 400 kV substation & Weston Marsh B – a new 14 bay 400 kV substation to connect new & existing circuits, as well as new generation.
- 31 bay new Walpole B 400kV substation to accommodate required new circuits.

6.8.10 Table 6.13 sets out the capital costs for option ECO 6 considering substation works and each technology option.

Table 6.13 – ECO 6 capital costs for each technology option

Item	Need	Capital cost			
Substation Works	Facilitate generation and connect new circuits	£1,355.3m			
New circuits		**AC overhead line**	**AC Cable**	**AC GIL**	**HVDC**
New circuit 140km	New circuit across B8 and B9	£756m	£8,419.4m	£9,699.2m	£7,746.5m
Total capital cost		£2,111.3m	£9,774.7m	£11,054.5m	£9,101.8m

6.8.11 Table 6.14 sets out the lifetime cost for the new circuit options; the lifetime costs are different for each circuit technology and are included as a differentiator between technologies. These costs are calculated using the methodology described in Appendix D.

Table 6.14 – ECO 6 lifetime cost for each technology option

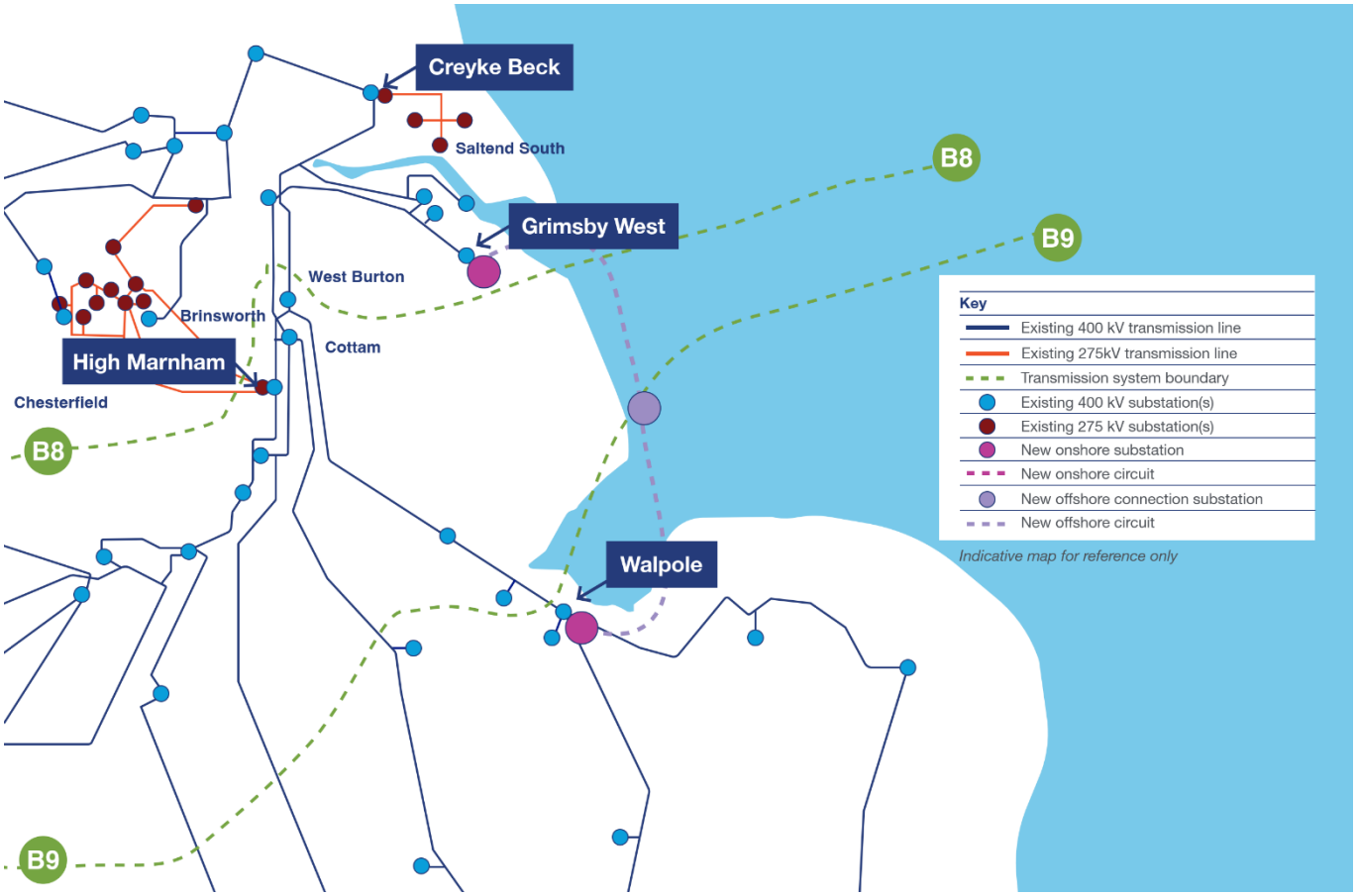
Land Based option	AC overhead line	AC Cable	AC GIL	HVDC
Capital cost of new circuits	£756m	£8,419.4m	£9,699.2m	£7,746.5m
Net Present Value (NPV) of cost of losses over 40 years	£392.7m	£296.2m	£182.3m	£706.9m
NPV of operation & maintenance costs over 40 years	£10.5m	£36.2m	£10.6m	£306.8m
Lifetime cost of new circuits	£1,159m	£8,752m	£9,892m	£8,760m

6.8.12 From the environmental and technical appraisal considered alongside capital and circuit lifetime costs the preferred option for ECO 6 is a 140 km connection between a new Grimsby West to new Walpole B via new Lincolnshire Connection substation(s) and new Weston Marsh substation(s), would be for an AC route through Lincolnshire. In light of this analysis our starting presumption for further development of this option should it be selected, would involve a wholly or largely overhead line connection, with a fully defined proposal being subject to the Defined proposal and Statutory Consultation stage as defined in “Our Approach to Consenting”.

6.9 Appraisal of Strategic Option ECSS 2 – new Grimsby West to new Walpole B subsea with offshore connection point

6.9.1 Option ECSS 2 involves the connection of new 400KV subsea transmission circuit connections between a new Grimsby West substation and a new Walpole B substation, with a new offshore high voltage direct current (HVDC) connection point. This follows a route to the east coast, offshore along the east coast, to a new onshore Walpole substation, with a length of approximately 155km, as shown in Figure 6.8.

Figure 6.8 – ECSS 2 – new Grimsby West to new Walpole B subsea with offshore connection point



6.9.2 An environmental and socio-economic appraisal of the circuit connection has been undertaken looking at this option. The appraisal is set out in Appendix G.

6.9.3 For the appraisal of subsea options of significant distance, a HVDC option would normally be expected to offer the most economic, efficient, and co-ordinated development and would meet NGET's obligations of economy and efficiency under the Electricity Act. Therefore, the environmental and socio-economic appraisal, which takes into consideration NGET's duty to have regard to the environment in Schedule 9, has considered whether the impacts of the proposal based upon HVDC technology in a marine environment would be likely to be acceptable. This enables the appraisal to highlight areas of highest impact aiding discussions throughout the consultation stage of the project.

6.9.4 Overall, ECSS 2 is constrained in relation to ecological considerations. The Greater Wash Special Protection Area (SPA) is unavoidable and would require cable crossings. Due to the number and proximity of designated sites along the north Norfolk coast including Cromer Shoal Chalk Beds Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ), The Wash and North Norfolk Coast Special Area of Conservation (SAC), Holkham National Nature Reserve, and North Norfolk Coast Ramsar, Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and Important Bird Area (IBA), it would not be possible to avoid all of these designated areas. It may be possible to avoid ecologically designated sites associated with the Humber Estuary, Saltfleet-by-Theddlethorpe Dunes and Gibraltar Point along the Lincolnshire coast depending on landfall siting. The Inner Dowsing, Race Bank and North Ridge SAC extends across the majority of the study area; this site could potentially be avoided depending on subsea cable routeing and offshore HVDC connection platform siting. The potential for likely significant effects on designated sites would need to be considered in relation to the Habitats Directive. There are potential heritage constraints which may result in potential effects on the setting of a number of scheduled monuments and listed buildings depending on converter station siting at Grimsby West. Other key environmental and socio-economic constraints are considered to be less influential with the potential to mitigate adverse impacts through careful consideration of routeing and siting and the use of appropriate technologies.

6.9.5 ECSS 2 would involve sections of undergrounded cable and above-ground infrastructure (converter stations); the nature of the environmental and socio-economic effects associated with the subsea option ECSS 2 would be different in nature to the overhead line options (ECO 5 and ECO 6) for a number of environmental and socio-economic topics. Overall, on the basis of the information currently available and assuming that appropriate mitigation is undertaken, together with sensitive routing and siting, environmental and socio-economic factors are not considered to differentiate between onshore and offshore options for the purposes of option selection.

6.9.6 Alongside the environmental and socio-economic appraisal of the option a technical appraisal has established that a transmission connection between a new Grimsby West substation and a new Walpole B substation via new offshore connection platforms would satisfy the National Electricity Transmission System Security and Quality of Supply Standard (NETS SQSS), and resolve the requirement of providing generation group connections for Lincolnshire coastal connections, whilst providing >6 GW of capacity across the B8 and B9 boundaries.

6.9.7 Technical analysis of this option includes the following:

- This option provides connections locations for all generation connecting between the south of the Humber Estuary and north of the Wash. It also facilities boundary capacity across the B8 and B9 Boundaries.
- The offshore option still requires provision of connection for the generation and is assumed to be connections based offshore on alternating current (AC)/HVDC platforms as part of three-ended circuits.
- The offshore options considered for option ECSS 2 offer no technical advantage over options considered for onshore alternatives. Both onshore and offshore, AC and HVDC alternatives considered offer NETS SQSS compliant solutions that meet the need case. Each technology considered within an option can be designed to provide the required system performance and capacity albeit with different characteristics. The only delivery advantage offered by offshore cable

installation compared to onshore is the ability to carry significant lengths of cable on a large vessel for deployment. Allowing cable laying campaigns of up 100km carried by a single vessel, whereas cables laid on land need to be deployed in drum lengths of circa 1km for delivery to site.

6.9.8 As set out in Chapter 5, we undertook a cost evaluation of the following two technologies for subsea options evaluation:

- 400 kV AC subsea cable
- 525 kV HVDC subsea cable

6.9.9 Option ECSS 2 requires the following transmission works to satisfy the requirements of the SQSS:

New Circuit requirements

- AC subsea connections circuit options use hi-capacity double circuits (two 400 kV AC routes) with a total capacity of up to 6930 mega volt amperes (MVA); or
- HVDC connection options use 525 kV 2 GW voltage source links, which would require a convertor station at each end, similar in size to a large warehouse. In this case a 6 GW three-ended connection would require three convertor stations at each substation (nine in total as there are three connection locations), this is to come close to matching the AC hi-capacity circuits of 6930 MVA.

Substation works

- 19 bay new Grimsby West 400 kV substation replacing the existing substation to accommodate new circuits and existing circuits.
- 31 bay new Walpole B 400 kV substation to accommodate required new circuits.
- A new offshore connection node to facilitate the connection of offshore generation.

6.9.10 Table 6.15 sets out the capital costs for option ECSS 2 considering substation works and each technology option.

Table 6.15 – ECSS 2 capital cost for each technology option

Item	Need	Capital cost	
Substation works	Facilitate generation and connect new circuits	£489.1m	
New circuits		**AC subsea cable**	**HVDC subsea cable**
New circuit 155 km	New circuit across B8 and B9	£9,358m	£7,554.2m
Total capital cost		£9,847.1m	£8,043.4m

6.9.11 Table 6.16 sets out the lifetime cost for the new circuit options; the lifetime costs are different for each circuit technology and are included as a differentiator between technologies. These costs are calculated using the methodology described in Appendix D.

Table 6.16 – ECSS 2 lifetime cost for each technology option

Subsea based option	AC subsea cable	HVDC subsea cable
Capital cost of new circuits	£9,358m	£7,554.2m
Net present value (NPV) of Cost of Losses over 40 years	£336.8m	£706.9m
NPV of operation & maintenance costs over 40 years	£40.8m	£307m
Lifetime cost of new circuits	£9,736m	£8,568m

6.9.12 From the environmental and technical appraisal considered alongside capital and circuit lifetime costs the preferred option for ECSS 2 is a 155 km connection between a new Grimsby West substation and new Walpole B substation, would be for a 6GW HVDC subsea option paralleling the Lincolnshire coast. In light of this analysis our starting presumption for further development of this option should it be selected, would involve a largely HVDC subsea connection.

7. Comparison of the appraisal of the strategic options

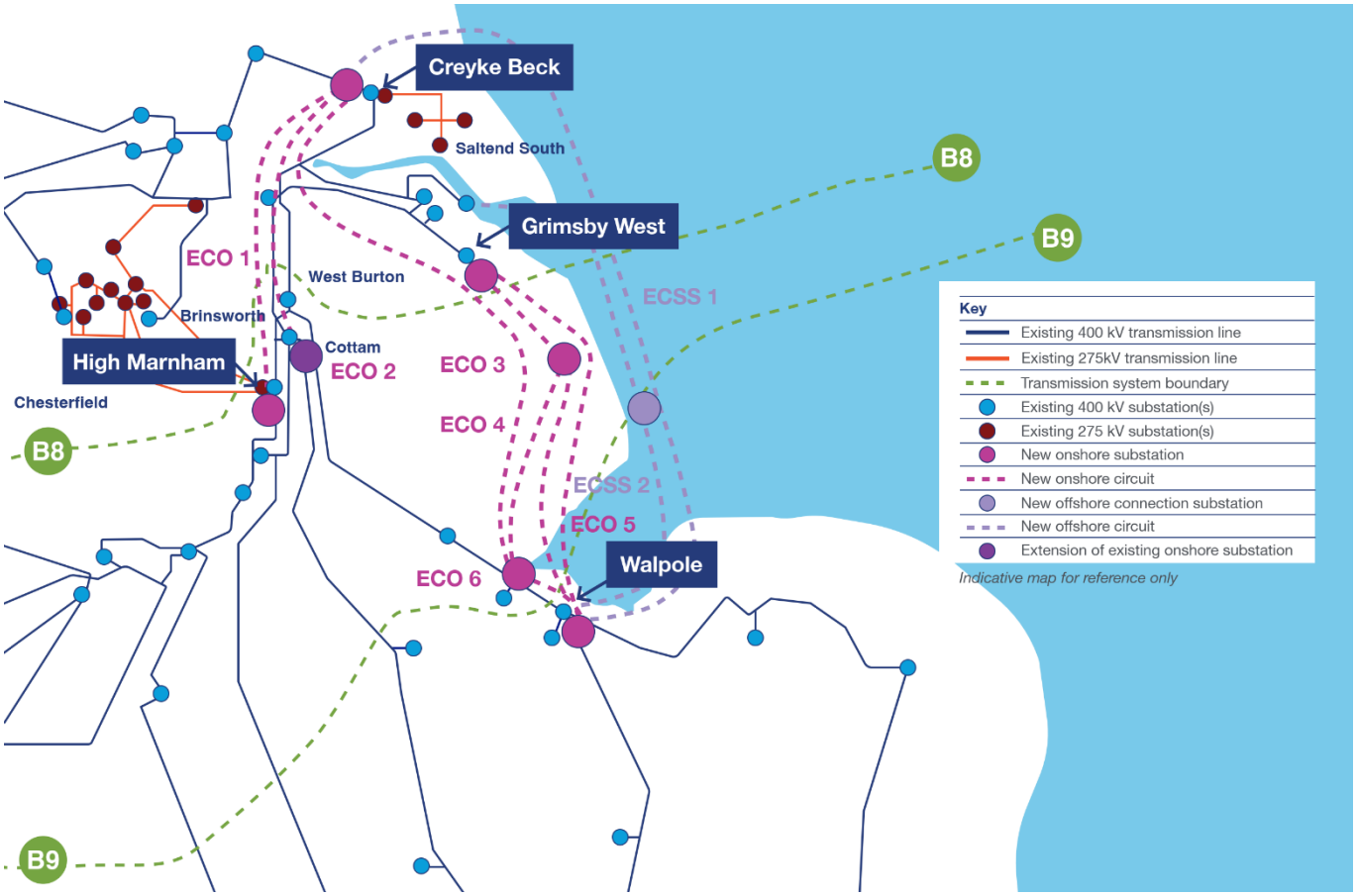
7.1 Overview

7.1.1 As described in the strategic options overview to resolve the Need Case, two sets of issues need to be resolved:

- Issue (a) - the need to provide a new AC transmission double circuit or multiple HVDC connections, which would ensure compliance for the Creyke Beck area generation group connections, whilst also providing >6 GW of additional boundary capacity across the B8 boundary.
- Issue (b) - the need to provide a new AC transmission double circuit or multiple HVDC connections, which would provide capacity for the East Coast generation group connections, whilst also increasing the boundary capacity across B8 by an additional >6 GW (an increase of >12 GW capacity in total) and providing >6 GW of capacity across the B9 boundary.

7.1.2 Figure 7.1 below shows a geographical indication of the eight options appraised as part of this report.

Figure 7.1 – Geographical indication of strategic options appraised



7.1.3 The following options were appraised in the previous sections by reference to environmental and socio-economic impacts, technical analysis, capital and lifetime cost.

7.2 Options resolving Issue (a)

7.2.1 The options considered to resolve Issue (a) – Creyke Beck area generation group and >6 GW capacity across B8 are:

- ECO 1 – New Creyke Beck to new High Marnham **85 km**
- ECO 2 – New Creyke Beck to Cottam **75 km**
- ECO 3 – New Creyke Beck to new Grimsby West, New Grimsby West Substation to New Walpole **225 km**
- ECO 4 – New Creyke Beck to new Grimsby West, new Grimsby West Substation to new Weston Marsh substation(s) **200 km**
- ECSS 1 – Subsea from new Creyke Beck – new Walpole **195 km**

7.3 Options resolving Issue (b)

7.3.1 The options considered to resolve Issue (b) – East Coast generation group, further >6 GW capacity across B8 (>12 GW total) and >6 GW of capacity across B9 are:

- ECO 5 – New Grimsby West to new Lincolnshire Connection substation(s), new Lincolnshire Connection substation(s) to new Walpole **140 km**
- ECO 6 – New Grimsby West to new Lincolnshire Connection substation(s), Lincolnshire Connection substation(S) to new Weston Marsh substation(s), new Weston Marsh substation(s) to new Walpole **140 km**
- ECSS 2 – Subsea new Grimsby West – Offshore Connection Node – new Walpole **155 km**

7.4 Environmental and socio-economic appraisal

7.4.1 The environmental and socio-economic appraisals for each option are fully documented in Appendix G. A comparative analysis is provided in Table 7.1 and Table 7.2 below. Each of the options appraised have their relative advantages and disadvantages. One of the key differentiators between options relates to overall route length which can impact the extent of environmental and socio-economic effects.

Table 7.1 – Options providing 6 GW increase across the B8 boundary and generation connections to Creyke Beck

Topic	ECO 1	ECO 2	ECO 3	ECO 4	ECSS 1 (Norfolk)	ECSS 1 (Lincs)
Environmental Biological	Requires a crossing of the Humber Estuary SPA and SAC.	Requires a crossing of the Humber Estuary SPA and SAC.	Requires a crossing of the Humber Estuary SPA and SAC. Whilst The Wash SPA and The Wash and North Norfolk Coast SAC are avoidable there is the potential for adverse effects depending on routeing.	Requires a crossing of the Humber Estuary SPA and SAC. Whilst The Wash SPA and The Wash and North Norfolk Coast SAC are avoidable there is the potential for adverse effects depending on routeing.	Although the Southern North Sea SAC and Holderness Offshore MCZ could potentially be avoided, the Holderness Inshore MCZ and The Greater Wash SPA are within the study area and would require cable crossings. . It is acknowledged that the study area could be extended further north to avoid a crossing of the Holderness MCZ however this would extend the overall cable length and potentially require a crossing of the Holderness	Although the Southern North Sea SAC and Holderness Offshore MCZ could potentially be avoided, the Holderness Inshore MCZ and The Greater Wash SPA are within the study area and would require cable crossings. . It is acknowledged that the study area could be extended further north to avoid a crossing of the Holderness MCZ however this would extend the overall cable length and potentially require a crossing of the Holderness

Topic		ECO 1	ECO 2	ECO 3	ECO 4	ECSS 1 (Norfolk)	ECSS 1 (Lincs)
						Offshore MCZ or the Southern North Sea Special SAC. Due to the number and proximity of the designated sites along the north Norfolk coast it would not be possible to avoid all designated areas.	Offshore MCZ. The Humber Estuary designated sites are potentially avoidable subject to landfall selection and subsea cable installation methods.
	Landscape & Visual	Requires a crossing of the Yorkshire Wolds Important Landscape Area. Potential effects on visual amenity for residents along affected settlement edges and at scattered properties.	Requires a crossing of the Yorkshire Wolds Important Landscape Area. Potential effects on visual amenity for residents along affected settlement edges and at scattered properties.	Requires a crossing of the Yorkshire Wolds Important Landscape Area. The Lincolnshire Wolds AONB itself would be avoided, however there is potential for long-term effects on views from the AONB. Potential for adverse landscape and visual impacts	Requires a crossing of the Yorkshire Wolds Important Landscape Area. The Lincolnshire Wolds AONB itself would be avoided, however there is potential for long-term effects on views from the AONB. Potential for adverse landscape and visual impacts	Crossing of the Norfolk Coast AONB would be unavoidable. Views from both the AONB and Norfolk Heritage Coast may to be affected for a temporary period during construction. Potential for temporary adverse visual effects on users of the Peddar's Way and Norfolk	The Lincolnshire Wolds AONB itself would be expected to be avoided. Potential for adverse residual permanent effects during the operational phase of the converter stations at Creyke Beck and Walpole.

Topic		ECO 1	ECO 2	ECO 3	ECO 4	ECSS 1 (Norfolk)	ECSS 1 (Lincs)
				due to the introduction of new substation infrastructure. Potential effects on visual amenity for residents along affected settlement edges and at scattered properties.	due to the introduction of new substation infrastructure. Potential effects on visual amenity for residents along affected settlement edges and at scattered properties.	Coast Path National Trail. Potential for adverse residual permanent effects during the operational phase of the converter stations at Creyke Beck and Walpole.	
	Historic Environment	Whilst designated heritage assets are likely to be avoidable there is the potential for significant impacts on the setting of such assets depending on the proximity of the overhead line.	Whilst designated heritage assets are likely to be avoidable there is the potential for significant impacts on the setting of such assets depending on the proximity of the overhead line and SEC at Cottam.	Whilst designated heritage assets are likely to be avoidable there is the potential for significant impacts on the setting of such assets depending on the proximity of the overhead line and substation infrastructure. Routeing to the west of Grimsby would need to avoid the Registered Park	Whilst designated heritage assets are likely to be avoidable there is the potential for significant impacts on the setting of such assets depending on the proximity of the overhead line and substation infrastructure. Routeing to the west of Grimsby would need to avoid the Registered Park	Whilst designated heritage assets are likely to be avoidable there is the potential for significant impacts on the setting of such assets depending on the proximity of the converter station infrastructure.	Whilst designated heritage assets are likely to be avoidable there is the potential for significant impacts on the setting of such assets depending on the proximity of the converter station infrastructure.

Topic		ECO 1	ECO 2	ECO 3	ECO 4	ECSS 1 (Norfolk)	ECSS 1 (Lincs)
				and Garden of Brocklesby Park.	and Garden of Brocklesby Park.		
	Physical	Requires crossings of main rivers and Flood Zone 2 and 3.	Requires crossings of main rivers and Flood Zone 2 and 3.	Requires crossings of main rivers and Flood Zone 2 and 3. Areas of Flood Zone 2 or 3 are expected to be unavoidable for the siting of new substation infrastructure at Walpole.	Requires crossings of main rivers and Flood Zone 2 and 3. Areas of Flood Zone 2 or 3 are expected to be unavoidable for the siting of new substation infrastructure at Weston Marsh.	Requires crossings of main rivers and Flood Zone 2 and 3 as well as a large number of drainage ditches. Areas of Flood Zone 2 or 3 are expected to be unavoidable for the siting of converter station infrastructure.	Requires crossings of main rivers and Flood Zone 2 and 3 as well as a large number of drainage ditches. Areas of Flood Zone 2 or 3 are expected to be unavoidable for the siting of converter station infrastructure.
Socio-economic	Settlements and Population	Numerous large urban areas within the study area including Kingston-Upon-Hull, Scunthorpe and Gainsborough as well as numerous smaller settlements scattered throughout.	Numerous large urban areas within the study area including Kingston-Upon-Hull, Scunthorpe and Gainsborough together with numerous smaller settlements scattered throughout.	Numerous large urban areas within the study area including Scunthorpe, Immingham, Grimsby and Boston as well as numerous smaller towns and settlements scattered throughout. These areas	Numerous large urban areas within the study area including Scunthorpe, Immingham, Grimsby and Boston as well as numerous smaller towns and settlements scattered throughout. These areas	The large urban areas of Kingston-Upon-Hull and Kings Lynn as well as numerous smaller towns and settlements scattered throughout the study area present a constraint for routeing of an	The large urban areas of Kingston-Upon-Hull and Boston as well as numerous smaller towns and settlements scattered throughout the study area present a constraint for routeing of an

Topic		ECO 1	ECO 2	ECO 3	ECO 4	ECSS 1 (Norfolk)	ECSS 1 (Lincs)
				would limit routeing opportunities at several points, particularly to the west and south of Grimsby where the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB is also a constraint.	would limit routeing opportunities at several points, particularly to the west and south of Grimsby where the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB is also a constraint.	underground cable.	underground cable.
	Tourism and Recreation	The Yorkshire Wolds National Trai and Trans Pennine Trail cross the northern portion of the study area. The Lincolnshire coast is a popular tourist destination with a number of coastal resorts and extensive areas of holiday accommodation. It is considered that effects upon the local tourist economy could be minimised	The Yorkshire Wolds National Trail land Trans Pennine Trail cross the northern portion of the study area. The Lincolnshire coast is a popular tourist destination with a number of coastal resorts and extensive areas of holiday accommodation. It is considered that effects upon the local tourist economy could be minimised	The Yorkshire Wolds National Trail and Trans Pennine Trail cross the northern portion of the study area. The Witham Way and Havenside Country Parks located to the west and east of Boston respectively are linear in nature and would need to be considered during routeing. The Lincolnshire coast is a popular tourist	The Yorkshire Wolds National Trail and Trans Pennine Trail cross the northern portion of the study area. The Witham Way and Havenside Country Parks located to the west and east of Boston respectively are linear in nature and would need to be considered during routeing. The Lincolnshire coast is a popular tourist	The Trans Pennine Trail extends across cross the northern portion of the study area. The Lincolnshire coast and north Norfolk coast are popular tourist destinations with a number of coastal resorts and extensive areas of holiday accommodation. It is considered that effects upon the local tourist economy could be minimised	The Trans Pennine Trail extends across cross the northern portion of the study area. The Witham Way and Havenside Country Parks located to the west and east of Boston respectively are linear in nature and would need to be considered during routeing. The Lincolnshire coast is a popular tourist

Topic	ECO 1	ECO 2	ECO 3	ECO 4	ECSS 1 (Norfolk)	ECSS 1 (Lincs)
	through careful routeing and design.	through careful routeing and design.	destination with a number of coastal resorts and extensive areas of holiday accommodation. It is considered that effects upon the local tourist economy could be minimised through careful routeing and design.	destination with a number of coastal resorts and extensive areas of holiday accommodation. It is considered that effects upon the local tourist economy could be minimised through careful routeing and design.	through careful routeing and design.	destination with a number of coastal resorts and extensive areas of holiday accommodation. It is considered that effects upon the local tourist economy could be minimised through careful routeing and design.
Infrastructure	Multiple road and rail crossings required including M180 and M62/A63.	Multiple road and rail crossings required including M180 and M62/A63.	Multiple road and rail crossings required including M180 and M62/A63.	Multiple road and rail crossings required including M180 and M62/A63.	Numerous marine infrastructure present including offshore wind farms, offshore cable routes and various pipelines and oil and gas infrastructure; it is unlikely that crossings of cables and pipelines could be avoided entirely. There are a number of marine	Numerous marine infrastructure present including offshore wind farms, offshore cable routes and various pipelines and oil and gas infrastructure; it is unlikely that crossings of cables and pipelines could be avoided entirely. There are a number of marine

Topic	ECO 1	ECO 2	ECO 3	ECO 4	ECSS 1 (Norfolk)	ECSS 1 (Lincs)
					aggregate dredging areas and shipping and navigation constraints which would need to be considered as part of subsea cable routeing. Multiple road and rail crossings required.	aggregate dredging areas and shipping and navigation constraints which would need to be considered as part of subsea cable routeing. Multiple road and rail crossings required.

Table 7.2 – Options providing additional 6 GW increase to B8, 6 GW capacity to B9 and generation connections to Lincolnshire Connection substation(s)

Topic		ECO 5	ECO 6	ECSS 2
Environmental	Biological	Whilst The Wash SPA and The Wash and North Norfolk Coast SAC are avoidable there is the potential for adverse effects depending on routeing.	Whilst The Wash SPA and The Wash and North Norfolk Coast SAC are avoidable there is the potential for adverse effects depending on routeing.	Potential effects on Humber Estuary SAC, SPA, Ramsar site and SSSI, Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Dunes and Gibraltar Point SAC and Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Sand Dunes SSSI depending on landfall selection. Potential for direct effects on designated sites along the north Norfolk coast including Cromer Shoal Chalk Beds MCZ, The Wash and North Norfolk Coast SAC, Holkham National Nature Reserve, and North Norfolk Coast RAMSAR, SSSI and IBA; it would not be possible to avoid all designated areas. The Greater Wash SPA is within the study area and would require cable crossings. The Inner Dowsing, Race Bank and North Ridge SAC extends across the majority of the study area; this site could potentially be avoided

Topic		ECO 5	ECO 6	ECSS 2
				depending on subsea cable routeing. Potential for effects on additional designated ecological sites including River Nar SSSI depending on onshore routeing.
	Landscape & Visual	The Lincolnshire Wolds AONB itself would be avoided, however there is potential for long-term effects on views from the AONB. Potential for adverse landscape and visual impacts due to the introduction of new substation infrastructure particularly at a Lincolnshire Connection substation(s) in a landscape which currently has little major development. Potential for adverse landscape and visual impacts due to the introduction of a new substation at Walpole. Potential effects on visual amenity for residents along affected settlement edges and at scattered properties.	The Lincolnshire Wolds AONB itself would be avoided, however there is potential for long-term effects on views from the AONB. Potential for views of new Lincolnshire Connection substation(s) infrastructure from within the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB depending on site selection. Potential for long term landscape and visual effects due to the introduction of new substation infrastructure, particularly at Lincolnshire Connection substation(s) and Weston Marsh in a landscape which currently has little major development. Potential for adverse landscape and visual impacts due to the introduction of a new substation at Walpole.	Temporary landscape and visual effects including impacts on the landscape of the Norfolk Coast AONB which could not be avoided. Views within and from both the AONB and North Norfolk Heritage Coast may be temporary period during construction. The Lincolnshire Wolds AONB would be avoided. Potential for temporary adverse visual effects on users of the Peddar's Way and Norfolk Coast Path National Trail. Potential for adverse residual permanent effects during the operational phase of the converter stations at Grimsby West and Walpole.

Topic		ECO 5	ECO 6	ECSS 2
			Potential effects on visual amenity for residents along affected settlement edges and at scattered properties.	
	Historic Environment	Whilst designated heritage assets are likely to be avoidable there is the potential for significant impacts on the setting of such assets depending on the proximity of the overhead line and substation infrastructure.	Whilst designated heritage assets are likely to be avoidable there is the potential for significant impacts on the setting of such assets depending on the proximity of the overhead line and substation infrastructure.	Whilst designated heritage assets are likely to be avoidable there is the potential for significant impacts on the setting of such assets depending on the proximity of the converter station infrastructure at Grimsby West.
	Physical	Requires crossings of main rivers and Flood Zone 2 and 3. Flood Zone 2 or 3 are expected to be unavoidable for the siting of new substation infrastructure at Walpole.	Requires crossings of main rivers and Flood Zone 2 and 3. Areas of Flood Zone 2 or 3 are expected to be unavoidable for the siting of new substation infrastructure at Walpole and Weston Marsh.	The onshore cable would have to cross several unavoidable watercourses including main rivers and associated floodplains, as well as a large number of drainage ditches. Areas of Flood Zone 2 or 3 are expected to be unavoidable the siting of converter station infrastructure at Walpole.
Socio-economic	Settlements and Population	Numerous large urban areas within the study area including Grimsby and Boston as well as	Numerous large urban areas within the study area including Grimsby and Boston as well as	The large urban areas of Grimsby and Kings Lynn as well as numerous smaller towns and

Topic		ECO 5	ECO 6	ECSS 2
		numerous smaller towns and settlements scattered throughout. These areas would limit routeing opportunities at several points, particularly to the west and south of Grimsby where the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB is also a constraint.	numerous smaller towns and settlements scattered throughout. These areas would limit routeing opportunities at several points, particularly to the west and south of Grimsby where the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB is also a constraint.	settlements scattered throughout the study area present a constraint for routeing of an underground cable.
	Tourism and Recreation	The Witham Way and Havenside Country Parks located to the west and east of Boston respectively are linear in nature and would need to be considered during routeing. The Lincolnshire coast and north Norfolk coast are popular tourist destinations with a number of coastal resorts and extensive areas of holiday accommodation. It is considered that effects upon the local tourist economy could be minimised through careful routeing and design.	The Witham Way and Havenside Country Parks located to the west and east of Boston respectively are linear in nature and would need to be considered during routeing. The Lincolnshire coast and north Norfolk coast are popular tourist destinations with a number of coastal resorts and extensive areas of holiday accommodation. It is considered that effects upon the local tourist economy could be minimised through careful routeing and design.	A number of NCN cross the study area including routes to/from Grimsby and to/from Kings Lynn. The Lincolnshire coast and north Norfolk coast are popular tourist destinations with a number of coastal resorts and extensive areas of holiday accommodation. It is considered that effects upon the local tourist economy could be minimised through careful routeing and design.
	Infrastructure	Multiple road and rail crossings required.	Multiple road and rail crossings required.	Numerous marine infrastructure present including offshore wind

Topic	ECO 5	ECO 6	ECSS 2
			farms, offshore cable routes and various pipelines and oil and gas infrastructure; it is unlikely that crossings of cables and pipelines could be avoided entirely. There are a number of marine aggregate dredging areas and shipping and navigation constraints which would need to be considered as part of subsea cable routeing. Multiple road and rail crossings required.

7.4.2 Table 7.3 and Table 7.4 below set out an overview of the capital and lifetime cost impacts of each alternative, noting that an option to resolve Issue (a) and an option to resolve Issue (b) have to be selected in combination to provide the full required connection capacities at Creyke Beck and Lincolnshire Coastal Connections; and the provision of >12GW total capacity across B8 and >6GW Capacity across B9.

Table 7.3 – Capital and lifetime cost impact for Issue (a)

Boundary or group	**Onshore options**				**Subsea option**
Issue (a)	**ECO 1**	**ECO 2**	**ECO 3**	**ECO 4**	**ECSS 1**
Creyke Beck connection capacity	New Creyke Beck to new High Marnham	New Creyke Beck to Cottam	New Creyke Beck to New Walpole	New Creyke Beck to Weston Marsh	New Creyke Beck to New Walpole
B8 >6 GW increase			(2 sections)	(2 sections)	
Economic technology (capacity)	overhead line	overhead line	overhead line	overhead line	HVDC
	85 km	75 km	225 km	200 km	195 km
	(6930 MW)	(6930 MW)	(6930 MW)	(6930 MW)	(6000 MW)
Total capital cost including non-circuit works	£734.2m	£740.6m	£1,960.3m	£2,168.6m	£7,339.8m
Circuit 40 yr lifetime NPV cost	£704m	£621m	£1,863m	£1,656m	£7,502m

Table 7.4 – Capital and lifetime cost impact for Issue (b)

Boundary or group	**Onshore options**		**Subsea option**
Issue (b)	**ECO 5**	**ECO 6**	**ECSS 2**
Lincolnshire coastal connections capacity	New Grimsby West to new Walpole B via new Lincolnshire Connection substation(s)	New Grimsby West to new Walpole B via new Lincolnshire Connection substation(s) and Weston Marsh	New Grimsby West to new Walpole B with Offshore Connection Node (3 ended HVDC)
B8 >6 GW Increase B9 >6 GW Increase	(3 sections)	(4 sections via Weston Marsh)	(Subsea)
Economic technology (capacity)	overhead line	overhead line	HVDC
	140 km	140 km	155 km
	(6930 MW)	(6930 MW)	(6000 MW)
Capital cost including non-circuit works	£1,493.5m	£2,111.3m	£8,043.4m
Circuit 40 yr lifetime NPV cost	£1,159m	£1,159m	£8,568m

8. Interaction with other projects

8.1 Overview of interacting projects with issue (a)

8.1.1 In March 2024, ESO published the 'Beyond 2030' report (more information on this can be found in Appendix H). This included an option code 'EDEU', which includes scope to develop and construct a new 400kV High Marnham substation, in addition to reconfiguring the existing electricity transmission system in the surrounding area. The new 400kV High Marnham substation is the southern connection point for ECO1.

8.1.2 Option EDEU was recommended to proceed in the previous NESO report 'NOA 2021/22 Refresh', published in July 2022, where the option was stated as essential to deliver the 'Pathway to 2030' based on an 'Earliest Optimal Delivery Date' of 2028.

8.1.3 The project is being developed by NGET, and the project name is 'Brinsworth to High Marnham Uprating'.

8.2 Overview of interacting projects with issue (b)

8.2.1 As stated in Chapter 5, Strategic options overview, a further consideration NGET has evaluated, is the connection of offshore transmission circuits from Scotland, referred to in this report as EGL 3 and EGL 4. These projects each consist of 2 GW voltage source convertor (VSC) high voltage direct current (HVDC) transmission circuits. Together these will transfer 4 GW of energy between Scotland and England and have been subject to their own strategic option assessment. EGL 3 and EGL 4 will interact with options considered to resolve issue (b), as set out in Chapter 6. Therefore, this report will undertake an interactivity assessment of the EGL 3 and EGL 4 projects, which will in turn provide a proposed connection location to deliver the optimum infrastructure solution for the region and achieve our obligations to consumers and the environment.

8.2.2 EGL 3 and EGL 4 have been the subject of their own full strategic options appraisal process; however, the location of the connection points has a significant impact upon what is required to be built in the Lincolnshire region. For instance, if EGL 3 and EGL 4 were to connect north of the B9 boundary, then additional transmission infrastructure could be anticipated as has already been suggested in the ESO Network Options Assessment (NOA) 2021/22 Refresh report and was identified as LRN 4 (as it was then known).

8.2.3 LRN 4 was identified as a new 180 km connection between North Lincolnshire and Hertfordshire, but was superseded by LRN 6 which is identified, in the Beyond 2030 report, as a new transmission capacity between the South Lincolnshire, Cambridgeshire and North West Norfolk boundary to Hertfordshire. This no longer includes the 90km of overhead line between North and South Lincolnshire.

8.2.4 Due to the interrelation between these projects, this report has undertaken an interactivity assessment to present how the connection location can impact upon the required amount of infrastructure needed in the immediate future.

8.2.5 ESO NOA 2021/22 Refresh report indicates that there are further investments interacting with the Lincolnshire area which currently indicate discounted or proceed signals. The associated ESO NOA code and descriptions are stated below:

- (NOA code E4L5) Proceed - Eastern Scotland to England 3rd link: Peterhead to the south Humber subsea HVDC Link. Referred to as Eastern Green Link 3 (EGL 3);
- (NOA Code TGDC) Proceed - Eastern subsea HVDC Link from east Scotland to south Humber area. Referred to as Eastern Green Link 4 (EGL 4);
- (NOA Code LRN 4 (replaced by LRN 6 in Beyond 2030)) Discounted in the Beyond 2030 report - New network need from North Lincolnshire to Hertfordshire;
- (NOA Code WWNC) Discounted in the Beyond 2030 report- New South Lincolnshire to East Anglia double circuit.

8.2.6 The 2021/22 NOA refresh assessments, and the most recent ETYS, assume that EGL 3 and EGL 4 will connect to the network in England above the B9 boundary, and that any new circuits constructed to connect the East Coast generation will not provide B9 capability (i.e., they will not fully address issue b).

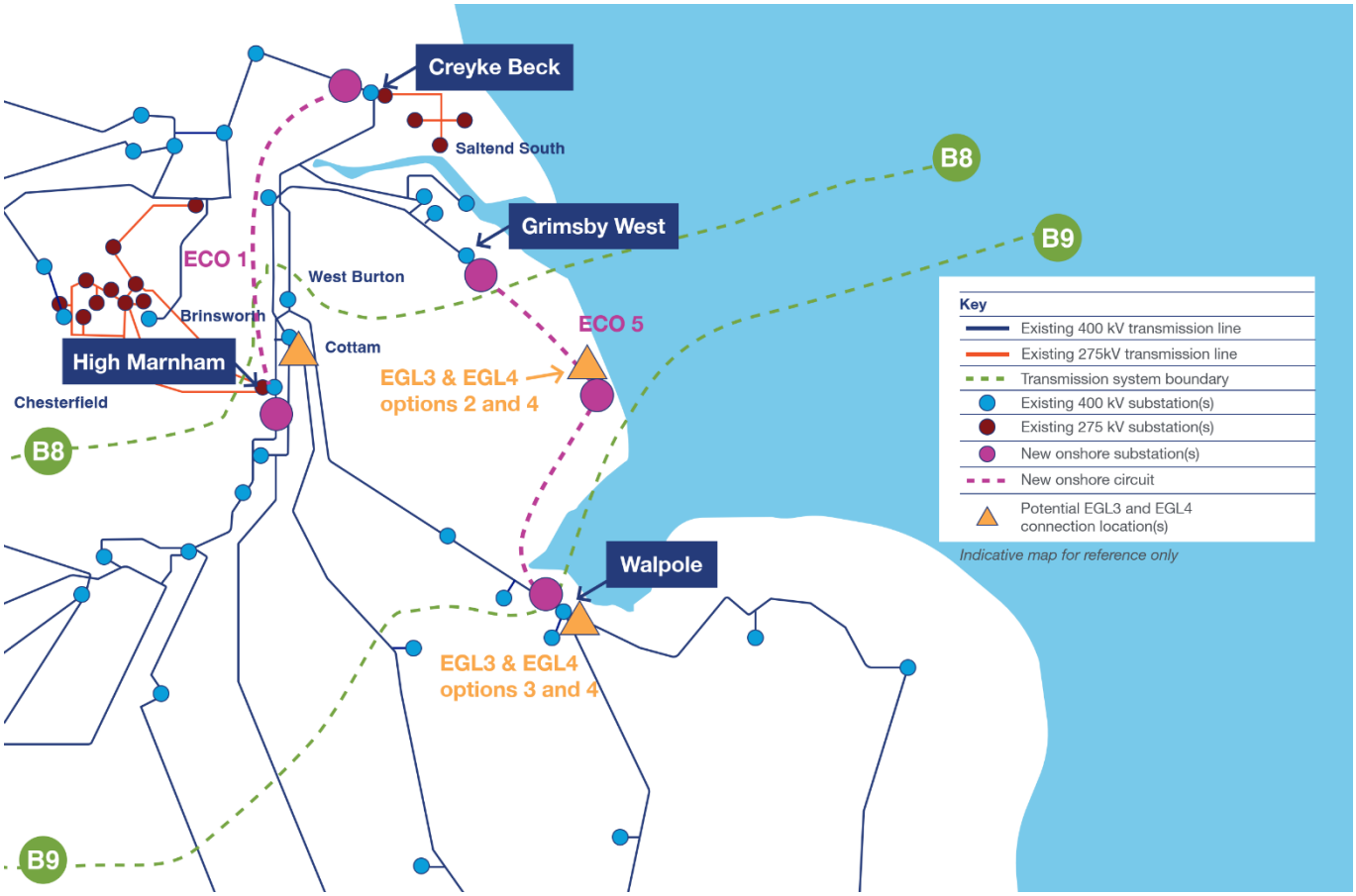
8.2.7 The options NGET have assessed to address Issue (b) have included a comparison between connecting the new generation connection circuits above B9, building a separate circuit across the boundary, as per the NOA assessments (ECO6), and connecting the new circuits directly to a MITS substation south of the B9 boundary (ECO5). Our assessments have determined that ECO6 is preferred, which would have removed the need for WWNC, if not already discounted.

8.2.8 We have also undertaken an interactivity assessment of the EGL 3 and EGL 4 projects and the schemes described in this report. This considered the most appropriate means of connecting those projects in the context of the Grimsby to Walpole proposals having regard to available information and assumptions. In turn, it has looked at the extent to which the interactivity would trigger the need for additional infrastructure such as LRN 6. The technology choices and more detailed analysis for EGL 3 and EGL 4 have been carried out for those projects and NGET are proposing to connect south of the B9 boundary, as per EGL Option 3 below. The strategic electrical solutions that we considered for connecting EGL 3 and EGL 4 are identified below:

- EGL Option 1 – New Lincolnshire Connection substation(s) (representing south of the Humber connection).
- EGL Option 2 – Cottam substation connection (representing moving the connection further inland).
- EGL Option 3 – New Walpole B substation connection (representing moving connection south of B8 and B9).
- EGL Option 4 – New Walpole B substation connection, with one project forming a three-ended circuit connecting to new Lincolnshire Connection substation(s) and new Walpole B substation.

8.2.9 Figure 8.1 below shows how the proposed EGL 3 and EGL 4 projects would have interacted with our proposals if connected above the B9 boundary, and how NGET intend them to interact with our proposals, connecting below the B9 boundary. The connection sites are only indicative for the purposes of comparing the cost of connection and impact upon B8 and B9 boundaries.

Figure 8.1 – Previous (above B9) and current (below B9) consideration of the EGL 3 and EGL 4 connection locations



8.2.10 Table 8.1 below shows the capital and lifetime cost variation along with the impact to B8 and B9 boundaries, including infrastructure requirements.

Table 8.1 – Comparison of the considered EGL 3 and EGL 4 Circuit Cost Options

Boundary or group	**EGL 3 Option**				
	EGL Option 1	EGL Option 2	EGL Option 3	EGL Option 4	
	Lincolnshire Coastal Connection	Cottam Connection	Walpole Connection	Walpole and EGL 3 Coastal Connection Substation turn-in	**Differential between EGL options**
		Baseline + 90km	Baseline + 75km	Baseline + 80km	
	EGL 3 = 565km	EGL 3 = 655km	EGL 3 = 640km	EGL 3 = 645km	
	EGL 4 = 461km	EGL 4 = 551km	EGL 4 = 536km	EGL 4 = 541km	
Impact on B8 boundary capacity	4GW	4GW	4GW	4GW	0GW
Impact on B9 boundary capacity	0	0	4GW	4GW	4GW
B9 Boundary reinforcement required	Y	Y	N	N	EGL Option 3 and 4 don't currently require Lincolnshire section of LRN 6 or WWNC
Capital Cost including non-circuit works	£7,621.5m	£8,935.2m	£8,960.8m	£9,091.1m	£1,469.6m difference between lowest and highest option
(Difference from option 1 Baseline)	(Baseline)	(£1,313.7m)	(£1,339.3m)	£1,469.6m)	
Circuit 40 yr Lifetime NPV Cost	£7,916m	£9,230m	£9,256m	£9,309m	£1,393m difference between lowest and highest option
(Difference from option 1 Baseline)	(Baseline)	(£1,314m)	(£1,340m)	(£1,393m)	

8.2.11 Table 8.1 shows that against identified boundary reinforcement requirements, the decision to move the EGL 3 and EGL 4 connections to a Main Interconnected Transmission System (MITS) substation south of B9 would have removed the need for 90km of overhead line required for LRN 4 between North and South Lincolnshire, if it was not already superseded by LRN 6, assuming that ECO6 is also developed.

8.2.12 The connection is required at a MITS substation because more than two circuits south of the connection point are required to provide benefit to the B9 boundary. This ensures that under fault conditions energy can flow to the south of the connection location.

8.2.13 Therefore, the outcome of the interactivity assessment, when NGET looked at holistic benefits to all projects was a recommendation that EGL 3 and EGL 4 should be connected south of the B9 boundary to a MITS substation, identified as new Walpole B substation.

8.2.14 As indicated above, moving EGL 3 and EGL 4 south of B9 will provide increased boundary capacity.

8.2.15 We initially planned to propose EGL Option 4 as the preferred option, which included a three-ended circuit connecting to new Lincolnshire Connection substations and the new Walpole B substation. However, a decision has now been made to take forward EGL Option 3, as the three-ended link is not necessary to meet the need case for the EGL 3/4 projects.

8.2.16 Further to LRN 6 superseding LRN 4 in the Beyond 2030 report, the project has evolved further and is now called Weston Marsh to East Leicestershire. This project has now completed non-statutory consultation and will be progressing to statutory consultation in September 2026. The project is still assumed to connect to the new Weston Marsh substation(s) being built as part of the Grimsby to Walpole project. Further details will become available on the project website closer to the consultation date.

8.2.17 One more project, EGL 5 (Eastern Green Link 5) has a proposed strategic option that we have taken forward for option appraisal. This is known as Option 1 (LCS).

8.2.18 We are proposing that the EGL 5 project connects into the new Lincolnshire Connection substation(s), and therefore, there is a dependency between the preferred option for EGL 5 and the delivery of Grimsby to Walpole. Further details are available on the project website.

9. Conclusions and next steps

9.1 Overview of identifying the strategic options

9.1.1 This updated Strategic Options Report (SOR) has reconsidered options to meet the revised Need Case set out in Chapter 4. After the reconsideration, there has been no change to the requirement that had been identified for the two sets of transmission circuits that contribute to National Electricity Transmission System (NETS) Security and Quality of Supply Standard (SQSS) compliance. This requires the resolution of two distinct sets of issues, as follows:

- Issue (a), a circuit is required to ensure compliance from the Creyke Beck area generation group whilst also providing >6GW of boundary capacity across the B8 boundary.
- Issue (b), a circuit is required to provide capacity to the East Coast generation group whilst increasing the boundary capacity across B8 by an additional >6 GW (giving >12 GW capacity) and providing >6 GW of capacity across the B9 boundary.

9.1.2 The findings of the options appraisal, which have considered a range of technical, environmental, socio-economic and cost issues, are summarised below.

9.2 Technical appraisal

9.2.1 All of the options considered in this report met the technical appraisal requirements of the Need Case, though some deliver greater benefits over others (for example ECO 1 over ECO 2).

9.2.2 Options ECO 1 and ECO 2 (resolving Issue (a)) had a specific technical difference. Option ECO 1 performs better when providing boundary capacity due to the proximity of demand as it is closer to the South Yorkshire conurbation. Option ECO 2 did not provide as much boundary benefit whilst also suffering from highly constrained routeing due to infrastructure in the vicinity of Cottam substation, introducing risks to construction. A comparison of siting between the two sites outlines a significant reduced risk at High Marnham compared to Cottam. The construction of a new substation at High Marnham offers a substantial cost saving compared to the optimum solution at Cottam. Furthermore, constructability risks are controllable by mitigation methods at High Marnham. In contrast, the risk profile is considerably higher at Cottam, risks are less manageable and may lead to abortive works and delays to the programme. This adds substantial weight in favour of ECO 1 when compared to ECO 2.

9.3 Environmental and socio-economic appraisal

9.3.1 For the Creyke Beck area generation group connections, all onshore options would need to cross the Humber Estuary Special Protection Area (SPA), Special Area of Conservation (SAC), Ramsar and Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) with potential for direct effects on breeding, over-wintering and passage bird species.

Paralleling the existing 4ZQ 400 kV overhead route to the west of Kingston-Upon-Hull and south over the River Ouse would potentially reduce impacts on protected species. For ECO 1 and ECO 2, whilst sites such as Thorne and Hatfield Moors SPA and Important Bird Area (IBA), Thorne Moor Special Area of Conservation (SAC), Hatfield Moor SAC, Hatfield Moors SSSI, Thorne, Crowle and Goole Moors SSSI, and Laughton Forest IBA are avoidable, there is the potential for adverse effects on the interest features for which these sites are designated.

9.3.2 For ECO 3 and ECO 4, whilst The Wash Ramsar Site, SSSI, SPA, IBA and National Nature Reserve, The Wash and North Norfolk Coast IBA and SAC, and Gibraltar Point Ramsar Site and IBA are avoidable, there is the potential for adverse effects on the interest features for which a number of these sites are designated. All onshore options would need to cross the Yorkshire Wolds Important Landscape Area.

9.3.3 For ECO 3 and ECO 4, although the Lincolnshire Wolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) itself would be avoided, there would be potential for long-term effects on views from the AONB, particularly given the low-lying open topography with views from the Wolds to the coast. The nature of the environmental and socio-economics effects associated with the OHL options (ECO 1, ECO 2, ECO 3 and ECO 4) including the associated substation infrastructure, would be different to the subsea options which would comprise subsea cables, buried onshore cables and converter stations. With reference to internationally or nationally important sites, subsea options ECSS 1 (Lincolnshire) and ECSS 1 (Norfolk) would have challenges relating to the installation of buried cables across marine ecological designations. Overall, on the basis of the information currently available and assuming that appropriate mitigation is undertaken, together with sensitive routing and siting, environmental and socio-economic factors are not considered to differentiate between onshore and offshore options for the purposes of option selection.

9.3.4 Appraisal of the strategic options showed that ECO 1 and ECO 2 options would have a significantly shorter overhead line route than that of ECO 3, ECO 4, and would be expected to have lower environmental and socio-economic effects.

9.3.5 For the East Coast generation group connections, appraisal of the strategic options showed that additional transmission circuits within ECO 5 and ECO 6 are comparable in terms of length and also that the levels of environmental and socio-economic effects would be expected to be similar. A key difference between these strategic options is that additional substation(s) at Weston Marsh would be required for ECO 6. The additional substation(s) at Weston Marsh for ECO 6 has potential to result in long term landscape and visual effects due to the introduction of new substation infrastructure in a landscape which currently has little major development, although new substation(s) at Weston Marsh are required due to contracted generation and it should be included within the Project's scope as it would provide benefits such as a coordinated approach to consenting and delivery efficiencies. Furthermore, situating the new Weston Marsh substation(s) in the vicinity of the Spalding Tee, and turning the existing circuits into it would reduce network complexity. It was determined that this substation would be delivered as part the Grimsby to Walpole Project as it would provide benefits such as a coordinated approach to consenting and delivery efficiencies.

9.3.6 The nature of the environmental and socio-economics effects associated with the OHL options (ECO 5 and ECO 6) including the associated substation infrastructure, would be different to the subsea option (ECSS 2) which would comprise subsea cables, buried onshore cables and converter stations. With reference to

internationally or nationally important sites, subsea option ECSS 2 would have challenges relating to the installation of buried cables across marine ecological designations. Overall, on the basis of the information currently available and assuming that appropriate mitigation is undertaken, together with sensitive routing and siting, environmental and socio-economic factors are not considered to differentiate between onshore and offshore options for the purposes of option selection.

9.4 Cost

9.4.1 An overview of the capital and lifetime cost impacts of each option is set out in Table 7.3 and Table 7.4. These may be summarised as follows:

- ECO 1: capital cost of £734.2m and lifetime circuit cost of £704m
- ECO 2: capital cost of £740.6m and lifetime circuit cost of £621m
- ECO 3: capital cost of £1,960.3m and lifetime circuit cost of £1,863m
- ECO 4: capital cost of £2,168.6m and lifetime circuit cost of £1,656m
- ECSS 1: capital cost of £7,339.8m and lifetime circuit cost of £7,502m
- ECO 5: capital cost of £1,493.5m and lifetime circuit cost of £1,159m
- ECO 6: capital cost of £2,111.3m and lifetime circuit cost of £1,159m
- ECSS 2: capital cost of £8,043.4m and lifetime circuit cost of £8,568m

9.5 Preferred options

9.5.1 ECO 1 and ECO 2 options would have a significantly shorter overhead line route than that of ECO 3 and ECO 4 and would be expected to have lower environmental and socio-economic effects, as well as lower capital and lifetime costs. ECO 1 and ECO 2 are therefore preferred to ECO 3 and ECO 4 amongst the Creyke Beck area generation group onshore options.

9.5.2 As set out in paragraph 9.2.2 above, ECO 1 has technical advantages when compared to ECO 2. ECO 1 performs better in terms of boundary capacity, whilst a connection into the proposed new substation at High Marnham would be technically less complex than connections to the existing substation at Cottam. A comparison of the Cottam and High Marnham sites indicates that High Marnham offers substantial cost savings, as well as reduced constructability risks. Overall, therefore, ECO 1 is the preferred onshore option.

9.5.3 An offshore option, ECSS 1, has also been assessed. Based on the information currently available, technical, environmental and socio-economic factors are not considered to differentiate between offshore and onshore options. However, ECSS 1 was substantially more expensive than any of the onshore options. This means that onshore options are preferred.

9.5.4 We therefore consider that, overall, ECO 1 represents the most advantageous of the Creyke Beck area Generation Group options when balancing cost, technical performance and environmental and socio-economic effects.

9.5.5 In terms of the East Coast Generation Group onshore options, ECO 5 and ECO 6 offer similar technical performance, and the transmission circuits are similar in length. This means that the levels of environmental and socio-economic effects associated with the transmission circuits would be expected to be similar. One key difference between these options is that additional substation(s) at Weston Marsh would be required for ECO 6. The additional substation has potential to result in long term landscape and visual effects due to the introduction of new substation infrastructure in a landscape which currently has little major development, although new substation(s) at Weston Marsh are required due to contracted generation and it should be included within the Project's scope as it would provide benefits such as a coordinated approach to consenting and delivery efficiencies. Furthermore, situating the new Weston Marsh substation(s) in the vicinity of the Spalding Tee, and turning the existing circuits into it would reduce network complexity. It was determined that this substation would be delivered as part the Grimsby to Walpole Project as it would provide benefits such as a coordinated approach to consenting and delivery efficiencies. ECO 6 is therefore the preferred onshore option.

9.5.6 An offshore option, ECSS 2, has also been assessed. Again, based on the information currently available, technical, environmental and socio-economic factors are not considered to differentiate between offshore and onshore options. However, ECSS 2 was substantially more expensive than either of the onshore options. This means that onshore options are preferred.

9.5.7 We therefore consider that, overall, ECO 6 represents the most advantageous of the East Coast generation group options when balancing cost, technical performance and environmental and socio-economic effects.

9.5.8 NGET therefore proposes to take forward the following options:

- To resolve Issue (a) - ECO 1 a new wholly or largely overhead line connection between new Creyke Beck substation to new High Marnham substation. With a high-level assessment capital cost of £734.2m and lifetime circuit cost of £704m. This has been assigned the project title of "North Humber to High Marnham".
- To resolve Issue (b) – ECO 6 a new Grimsby West substation to new Lincolnshire Connection substation(s), and new Lincolnshire Connection substation(s) to a new Walpole B substation via new Weston Marsh substation(s) following a route through Lincolnshire, with a route length of approximately 140km. A capital cost of £2,111.3m and lifetime circuit cost of £1,159m.

9.5.9 This report also recommends that EGL 3 and EGL 4 should be connected south of the B9 boundary to a Main Interconnected Transmission System substation, identified as new Walpole B substation.

9.5.10 As indicated above, moving EGL 3 and EGL 4 south of B9 will provide increased boundary capacity.

9.5.11 NGET initially planned to propose EGL Option 4 as the preferred option, which included a three-ended circuit connecting to new Lincolnshire Connection substations and the new Walpole B substation. However, a decision has now been made to take forward EGL Option 3, as the three-ended link is not necessary to meet the need case for the EGL 3/4 projects.

9.6 Next steps

9.6.1 Following completion of the Assessment and Land Rights phase, the North Humber to High Marnham project moved into the Application, Examination and Decision phase of the project development and delivery process.

9.6.2 Meanwhile, the Grimsby to Walpole project moved from the Defined Proposal and Statutory Consultation phase into the Assessment and Land Rights phase of the project development and delivery process.

9.6.3 More detailed analysis for EGL 3, EGL 4 has been carried out separately for those projects. For further details, please visit the project website[26].

[26] Eastern Green Link 3 & 4 project website https://www.nationalgrid.com/the-great-grid-upgrade/eastern-green-link-3-and-4

Appendix A Summary of National Grid Electricity Transmission Legal Obligations

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Appendix A Summary of National Grid Electricity Transmission Legal Obligations

A.1 Electricity Transmission Licence

A.1.1 The Electricity Act 1989 (the 'Electricity Act') defines transmission of electricity within GB and its offshore waters, as a prohibited activity, which cannot be carried out without permission by a transmission licence granted under Section 6(1)(b) of the Electricity Act (a 'Transmission Licence').

A.1.2 National Grid Electricity Transmission ('National Grid') has been granted a Transmission Licence that permits transmission owner activities in respect of the electricity transmission system National Grid owns, develops and maintains in England and Wales.

A.1.3 Each Transmission Licence includes conditions which define the scope of the permission granted to carry out a prohibited activity in terms of duties, obligations, restrictions and rights. The generic conditions that apply to any holder of a Transmission Owner licence type are set out in Sections A, B and D of the Standard Conditions of the Transmission Licence. Conditions that only apply to a specific licensee are set out as Special Conditions of that Transmission Licence.

A.1.4 National Grid is therefore bound by the legal obligations primarily set out in the Electricity Act and its Transmission Licence. The following list provides a summary overview of requirements that are considered when developing proposals to construct new transmission system infrastructure.

A.2 Electricity Act Duties

A.2.1 In accordance with Section 9 of the Electricity Act, National Grid is required to develop and maintain an efficient, coordinated and economical system of electricity transmission.

A.2.2 Schedule 9 of the Electricity Act requires National Grid, when formulating proposals for new lines and other works, to:

"…have regard to the desirability of preserving natural beauty, of conserving flora, fauna, and geological or physiographical features of special interest and of protecting sites, buildings and objects of architectural, historic or archaeological interest; and to do what [it] reasonably can, to mitigate any effect which the proposals would have on the natural beauty of the countryside or on any such flora, fauna, features, sites, buildings or objects".

A.2.3 National Grid's Stakeholder, Community and Amenity Policy ('the Policy') sets out how the company will meet this Schedule 9 duty. The commitments within the Policy include:

- only seeking to build new lines and substations where the existing transmission infrastructure cannot be upgraded technically or economically to meet transmission security standards;
- where new infrastructure is required, seeking to avoid areas that are nationally or internationally designated for their landscape, wildlife or cultural significance, and
- minimising the effects of new infrastructure on other sites valued for their amenity.

A.2.4 The Policy also refers to the application of best practice methods to assess the environmental impacts of proposals and identify appropriate mitigation and/or offsetting measures. Effective consultation with stakeholders and the public is also promoted by the Policy.

A.3 National Grid's Transmission Licence Requirements

A.3.1 Condition B12: System Operator – Transmission Owner Code

All Transmission Licensees are required to have the System Operator Transmission Owner Code ('STC') in place that defines the arrangements within the transmission sector and sets out how the transmission system operator can access and use transmission services provided by transmission owners.

The STC structure aligns with key activities within the transmission sector including:

- Planning Co-ordination (of transmission system development works and construction);
- Provision of transmission services within different operational timescales, and
- Payments from transmission system operator to providers of transmission services (after service has been delivered).

A.3.2 Condition B16: Electricity Network Innovation Strategy

All Transmission Licensees are required to have a joined-up approach to innovation and develop an Electricity Network Innovation Strategy that is reviewed every two years.

A.3.3 Condition D2: Obligation to provide transmission services

Each transmission owner is required to provide transmission services to the transmission system operator as defined in the STC. Transmission services provided to the transmission system operator include:

- enabling use to be made of existing transmission owner assets, and
- responding to requests for the construction of additional transmission system capacity (including system extension, disconnections and/or reinforcement).

A.3.4 Condition D3: Transmission system security standard and quality of service

Transmission owners are required to at all times plan, develop the transmission system in accordance with the National Electricity Transmission System Security and Quality of Supply Standard ('NETS SQSS').

A transmission owner with supporting evidence, may ask the Authority to grant derogation from the requirements set out in the NETS SQSS. Any decision in respect of NETS SQSS derogations are subject to the Authority's consideration of all relevant factors.

A.3.5 Condition D17: Whole Electricity System Obligations

Transmission owners are required to coordinate and cooperate with Transmission Licensees and electricity distributors in order to build common understanding of where actions taken by one could have cross-network impacts. A transmission owner should implement actions or processes that are identified that:

- will not have a negative impact on its network; and
- are in the interest of the efficient and economical operation of the total system.

Appendix B Requirement for Development Consent Order

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Appendix B Requirement for Development Consent Order

B.1 Electricity network infrastructure developments

B.1.1 Developing the electricity transmission system in England and Wales subject to the type and scale of the project, may require one or more statutory consents which may include:

- planning permission under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990;
- a marine licence under the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009;
- a Development Consent Order ("DCO") under the Planning Act 2008, and/or
- a variety of consents under related legislation.

B.1.2 The Planning Act 2008 defines developments of new electricity overhead lines of 132kV and above as nationally significant infrastructure projects ('NSIPs') requiring a DCO. Such an order may also incorporate consent for other types of work that are associated with new overhead line infrastructure development, and these may be incorporated as part of a DCO that is granted. Applications for a DCO have to be determined in accordance with National Policy Statements ("NPS") in most cases.

B.1.3 Five NPSs for energy infrastructure were designated by the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change in November 2023 and confirmed by Parliament in January 2024. The relevant NPSs for electricity transmission infrastructure developments are the Overarching National Policy Statement for Energy (EN-1) and the National Policy Statement for Electricity Networks Infrastructure (EN-5), which is read in conjunction with EN-1. Further updates to the NPSs came into force on 6 January 2026, and this report has been updated where relevant to reflect those changes. The current National Policy Statement for Nuclear Energy Generation (EN-7), designated in December 2025, provides the framework for assessing development consent applications for new nuclear power stations and supersedes EN-6 for future projects, which applied to stations deployable by the end of 2025.

B.1.4 Section 104(3) of the Planning Act 2008 states that the decision maker must determine an application for a DCO in accordance with any relevant NPS, except in certain specified circumstances (such as where the adverse impact of the proposed development would outweigh its benefits). The energy NPSs therefore provide the primary policy basis for decisions on DCO applications for electricity transmission projects. The NPSs may also be a material consideration for decisions on other types of development consent in England and Wales (including offshore wind generation projects) and for planning applications under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

B.2 Demonstrating the need for a project

B.2.1 Part 3 of EN-1 sets out Government policy on the need for new nationally significant energy infrastructure projects. Paragraphs 3.2.1 and 3.2.2 confirm that the UK needs a range of the types of energy infrastructure covered by the NPS to ensure the supply of energy always remains secure, reliable, affordable, and consistent with

achieving net zero emissions in 2050 for a wide range of future scenarios. Paragraph 3.2.9 states that "substantial weight" should be given to the urgent need for the types of infrastructure covered by the NPS when considering applications for DCOs.

B.2.2 Description of the need for:

- new electricity transmission infrastructure is set out in EN-1, EN-3 and EN-5
- new offshore/onshore wind generation is set out in EN-1 and EN-3, and
- new nuclear generation is set out in EN-1 and EN-7 (EN-6 was superseded by EN-7 in December 2025).

B.2.3 The need for new transmission infrastructure for this project is described in Chapter 4.

B.3 Assessment principles applied by decision maker

B.3.1 Part 4 of EN-1 sets out the general policies that are applied in determining DCO applications relating to new energy infrastructure. Part 2 of EN-5 sets out the assessment principles in the specific context of electricity networks infrastructure.

B.3.2 Principles of particular importance for transmission infrastructure projects include:

B.3.3 Presumption in favour of development

- Section 4.1 of EN-1 confirms that the Secretary of State will start with a presumption in favour of granting consent for energy NSIPs. This presumption applies unless any more specific and relevant policies set out in the relevant NPS clearly indicate that consent should be refused. The presumption is also subject to the exceptions set out in Section 1.1.4 of EN-1.
- In assessing any application in particular when weighing its adverse impacts against its benefits, the SoS should take account of potential:
  - benefits (e.g. the contribution to meeting the need for energy infrastructure, job creation, reduction of geographical disparities, environmental enhancements, and long term or wider benefits), and
  - adverse impacts (including on the environment, and including any long-term and cumulative adverse impacts, as well as any measures to avoid, reduce, mitigate or compensate for any adverse impacts, following the mitigation hierarchy).

B.3.4 The critical national priority for low carbon infrastructure

- Section 4.2 of EN-1 states that there is a critical national priority (CNP) for the provision of nationally significant low carbon infrastructure. EN-1 confirms that the CNP extends to all power lines in scope of EN-5 (including network reinforcement and upgrade works, and associated infrastructure such as substations), CNP is not limited to infrastructure associated specifically with a particular generation technology.
- Paragraphs 4.2.28 to 4.2.30 explain that the CNP policy is relevant during Secretary of State decision making in reference to any residual impacts. Where the required assessment has been provided by an applicant, the CNP policy applies a starting assumption that CNP Infrastructure will meet tests such as:

- where development within a Green Belt requires very special circumstances to justify development,
- where development within or outside a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) requires the benefits (including need) of the development in the location proposed to clearly outweigh both the likely impact on features of the site that make it a SSSI, and any broader impacts on the national network of SSSIs,
- where development in nationally designated landscapes requires exceptional circumstances to be demonstrated, and
- where substantial harm to or loss of significance to heritage assets should be exceptional or wholly exceptional.

- Paragraphs 4.2.31 to 4.2.35 set out the approach to be taken to CNP Infrastructure in the context of a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) or a Marine Conservation Zone Assessment (MCZA):
  - Any HRA or MCZA residual impacts will continue to be considered under existing frameworks.
  - Where, following Appropriate Assessment or MCZA, CNP Infrastructure has residual adverse impacts on the integrity of sites forming part of the UK national site network, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects, or which significantly risk hindering the achievement of the stated conservation objectives for the MCZ (as relevant) the Secretary of State will consider making a derogation.
  - In that consideration, the Secretary of State will start from the position that energy security and decarbonising the power sector to combat climate change:
    - requires a significant number of deliverable locations for CNP Infrastructure and for each location to maximise its capacity, with the fact that there are other potential plans or projects deliverable in different locations to meet the need for CNP Infrastructure being unlikely to be treated as an alternative solution and the existence of another way of developing the proposed plan or which results in a significantly lower generation capacity being unlikely to meet the objectives and therefore be treated as an alternative solution, and
    - are capable of amounting to imperative reasons of overriding public interest (IROPI) for HRAs, and, for MCZ assessments, the benefit to the public is capable of outweighing the risk of environmental damage, for CNP Infrastructure.
  - For HRAs, where an applicant has shown there are no deliverable alternative solutions, and that there are IROPI, compensatory measures must be secured as part of a derogation.
  - For MCZs, where an applicant has shown there are no other means of proceeding which would create a substantially lower risk, and the benefit to the public outweighs the risk of damage to the environment, the Secretary of State must be satisfied that measures of equivalent environmental benefit will be undertaken.

- EN-1 requires applicants to clearly demonstrate how the mitigation hierarchy has been applied, including seeking advice from the appropriate Statutory Nature Conservation Bodies in agreeing the approach.

B.3.5 Consideration of alternatives

- Section 4.3 of EN-1 states that, from a planning policy perspective alone, there is no general requirement to consider alternatives or to establish whether the proposed project represents the best option. However, in relation to electricity transmission projects, paragraph 2.9.14 of EN-5 states,

  "Where the nature or proposed route of an overhead line will likely result in particularly significant landscape and visual impacts, as would be assessed through seascape, landscape and visual impact assessment (SLVIA), the applicant should demonstrate that they have given due consideration to the costs and benefits of feasible alternatives to the overhead line. This could include, where appropriate re-routing, underground or subsea cables and the feasibility e.g. in cost, engineering or environmental terms of these."

- Section 4.3 of EN-1 also makes clear that there will be circumstances where an applicant is specifically required to include information in their application about the main alternatives that were considered. These circumstances may include requirements in relation to compulsory acquisition and habitats sites.

B.3.6 Good design

- Section 4.7 of EN-1 stresses the importance of 'good design' for energy infrastructure, explaining that this goes beyond aesthetic considerations as fitness for purpose and sustainability are equally important. It is acknowledged in EN-1 that the nature of much energy infrastructure development will often limit the extent to which it can contribute to the enhancement of the quality of the area. Section 2.4 of EN-5 highlights that the Secretary of State should bear in mind that electricity networks infrastructure must in the first instance be safe and secure, and that the functional design constraints of safety and security may limit an applicant's ability to influence the aesthetic appearance of that infrastructure.

B.3.7 Climate change adaptation and resilience

- Section 4.10 of EN-1 explains how climate change adaptation and resilience should be taken into account, requiring the assessment of the impacts on and from the proposed energy project across a range of climate change scenarios. Section 2.3 of EN-5 expands on this in the specific context of electricity networks infrastructure. This states that DCO applications are required to set out the vulnerabilities / resilience of the proposals to flooding, effects of wind and storms on overhead lines, higher average temperatures leading to increased transmission losses, earth movement or subsidence caused by flooding or drought (for underground cables) and coastal erosion (for the landfall of offshore transmission cables and their associated substations in the inshore and coastal locations respectively).

B.3.8 Networks DCO applications submitted in isolation

- Section 2.7 of EN-5 confirms that it can be appropriate for DCO applications for new transmission infrastructure to be submitted separately from applications for the generation that this infrastructure will serve. Section 2.8 of EN-5 explains that, where an application is a reinforcement project in its own right and does not accompany an application for a generating station, or is not underpinned by a "contractually-supported agreement" to provide an as-yet-unconsented generating station with a connection, the Secretary of State should have regard to the need case for new electricity networks infrastructure set out in Section 3.3 of EN-1.

B.3.9 Electricity Act Duties

- Paragraphs 2.8.7 and 2.8.8 of EN-5 recognise developers' duties pursuant to section 9 of the Electricity Act to bring forward efficient and economical proposals in terms of network design, as well as the duty to facilitate competition and so provide a connection whenever and wherever one is required.

B.3.10 Adverse impacts and potential benefits

- Part 5 of EN-1 covers the impacts that are common across all energy NSIPs and sections 2.9-2.15 of EN-5 consider impact in the specific context of electricity networks infrastructure.
- Those impacts identified in EN-1 include air quality and emissions, greenhouse gas emissions, biodiversity and geological conservation, civil and military aviation and defence interests, coastal change (to the extent in or proximate to a coastal area), dust, odour, artificial light, smoke, steam and insect infestation, flood risk, historic environment, landscape and visual, land use, noise and vibration, socio-economic impacts, traffic and transport, resource and waste management and water quality and resources. The extent to which these impacts are relevant to a particular stage of a project, or are a relevant differentiator at a particular stage of the options appraisal process, will vary. In particular, some of these impacts are scoped out of this stage of the options appraisal process for this project.
- EN-5 considers specific potential impacts associated with electricity networks, including the following topics: biodiversity and geological conservation, landscape and visual, noise and vibration, electric and magnetic fields and sulphur hexafluoride (SF6).
- Landscape and Visual impacts are of particular relevance for electricity transmission infrastructure projects. Paragraph 2.9.7 of EN-5 states that the Government does not believe that development of overhead lines is incompatible in principle with the statutory duty under section 9 of the Electricity Act 1989 to have regard to visual and landscape amenity and to reasonably mitigate impacts. While paragraph 2.9.20 of EN-5 states that use of overhead lines as transmission technology should be the strong starting presumption for electricity networks developments, EN-5 recognises that in practice overhead lines can give rise to adverse landscape and visual impacts, dependent upon their type, scale, siting, degree of screening and the nature of the landscape and local environment through which they are routed. It also confirms that the presumption is reversed when crossing part of a nationally designated landscape.
- In relation to alternative technologies for electricity transmission projects, paragraph 2.9.23 of EN-5 states in relation to developments crossing a nationally designated landscape that:

  "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."

- Similarly, paragraph 2.9.25 of EN-5 states in relation to developments that do not cross a nationally designated landscape that:

  "taking account of the fact that the government has not laid down any further rule on the circumstances requiring use of underground or subsea cables, the Secretary of State must weigh the feasibility, cost, and any harm of the undergrounding or subsea option against: the adverse implications of the overhead line proposal; the cost and feasibility of re-routing overhead lines or mitigation proposals for the relevant line section; and the cost and feasibility of the reconfiguration, rationalisation, and/or use of underground or subsea cabling of proximate existing or proposed electricity networks infrastructure."

B.3.11 Paragraph 2.9.18 of EN-5 confirms that the Holford Rules, which are a set of "common sense" guidelines for routeing new overhead lines should be embodied in applicants' proposals. The Horlock Rules deal in a similar fashion with the siting of new substations and similar infrastructure. Paragraph 2.11.2 goes on to state that the Secretary of State should be satisfied that the development, so far as is reasonably possible, complies with the Holford Rules and Horlock Rules.

Appendix C
Technology Overview

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Appendix C Technology Overview

C.1 Introduction

C.1.1 This section provides an overview of the technologies available when the strategic options described in this Report were identified. It provides a high-level description of the relevant features of each technology. The costs for each technology are presented in Appendix D.

C.1.2 The majority of electricity systems throughout the world are AC systems. Consumers have their electricity supplied at different voltages depending upon the amount of power they consume e.g. 230V for domestic customers and 11 kV for large factories and hospitals. The voltage level is relatively easy to change when using AC electricity, which means a more economical electricity network can be developed for customer requirement. This has meant that the electrification of whole countries could be and was delivered quickly and efficiently using AC technology.

C.1.3 DC electricity did not develop as the means of transmitting large amounts of power from generating stations to customers because DC is difficult to transform to a higher voltage and bulk transmission by low voltage DC is only effective for transporting power over short distances. However, DC is appropriate in certain applications such as the extension of an existing AC system or when providing a connection to the transmission system.

C.1.4 In terms of voltage, the transmission system in England and Wales operates at both 275 kV and 400 kV. The majority of National Grid's transmission system is now constructed and operated at 400 kV, which facilitates higher power transfers and lower transmission losses.

C.1.5 There are a number of different technologies that can be used to provide transmission connections. These technologies have different features which affect how, when and where they can be used. The main technology options for electricity transmission are:

- Overhead lines
- Underground cables
- Gas Insulated Lines ("GIL"), and
- High Voltage Direct Current (HVDC).

C.1.6 This appendix provides generic information about each of these four technologies. Further information, including a more detailed technical review is available in a series of factsheets that can be found at the project website referenced at the beginning of this Report.

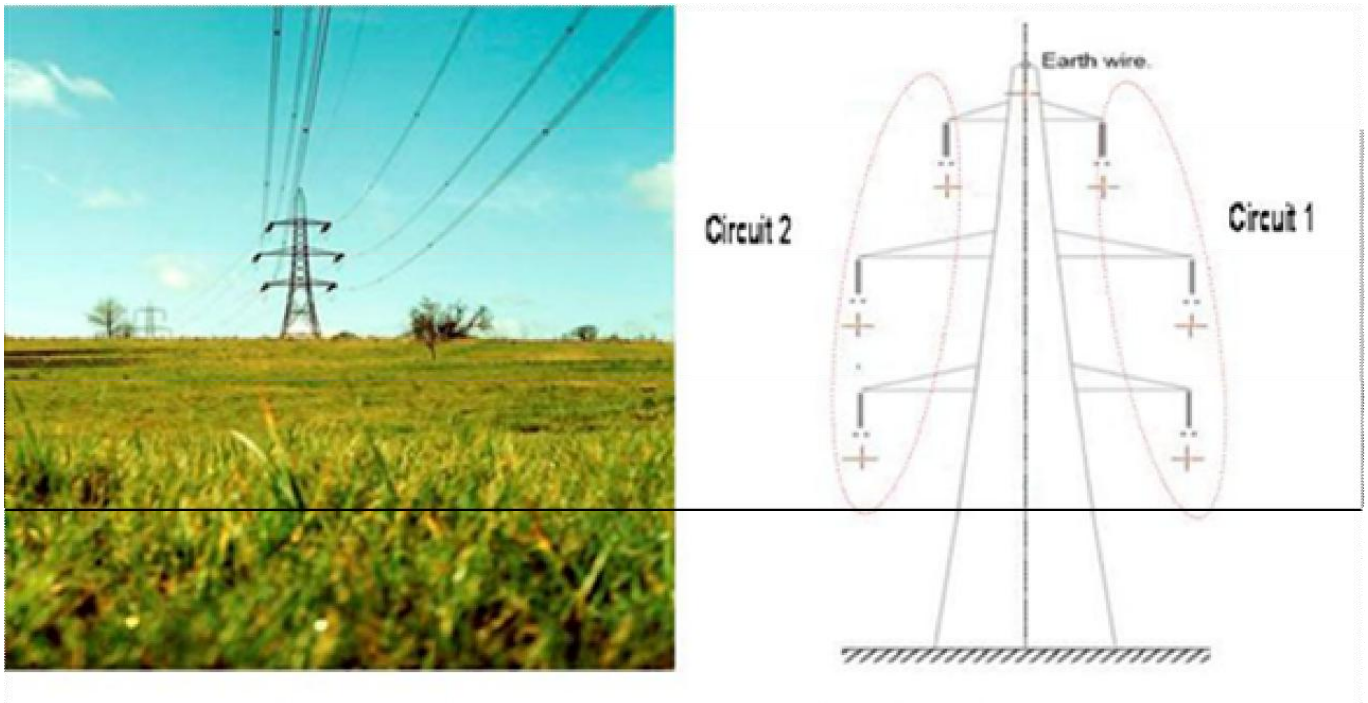
C.2 Overhead lines

C.2.1 Overhead lines form the majority of the existing transmission system circuits in Great Britain and in transmission systems across the world. As such there is established understanding of their construction and use.

C.2.2 Overhead lines are made up of three main component parts which are; conductors (used to transport the power), pylons (used to support the conductors) and insulators (used to safely connect the conductors to pylons).

C.2.3 Figure C.1 shows a typical pylon used to support two 275 kV or 400 kV overhead line circuits. This type of pylon has six arms (three either side), each carrying a set (or bundle) of conductors.

Figure C.1 Example of a 400 kV Double-circuit Tower



C.2.4 The number of conductors supported by each arm depends on the amount of power to be transmitted and will be either two, three or four conductors per arm. Technology developments have increased the capacity that can be carried by a single conductor and therefore, new overhead lines tend to have two or three conductors per arm.

C.2.5 With the conclusion of the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) pylon design competition[27] and other recent work with manufacturers to develop alternative pylon designs, National Grid is now able to consider a broader range of pylon types, including steel lattice and monopole designs. The height and width is different for each pylon type, which may help National Grid to manage the impact on landscape and visual amenity better. Figure C.2, below, shows an image on the monopole design called the T-pylon that was developed by National Grid.

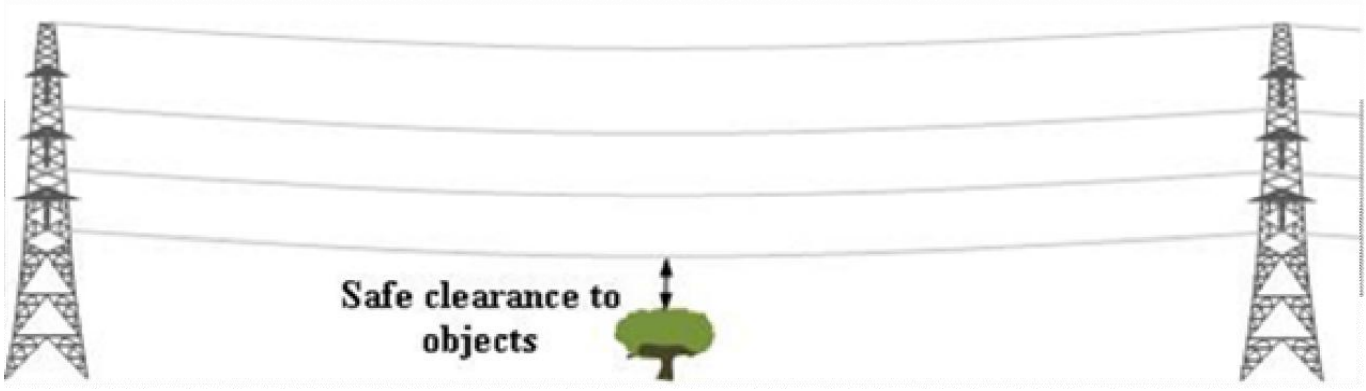
[27] Pylon Design an RIBA competition https://www.architecture.com/awards-and-competitions-landing-page/competitions-landing-page/pylon

Figure C.2 – The T-pylon



C.2.6 Pylons are designed with sufficient height to ensure that the clearances between each conductor and between the lowest conductor and the ground, buildings or structures are adequate to prevent electricity jumping across. The minimum clearance between the lowest conductor and the ground is normally at the mid-point between pylons. There must be sufficient clearance between objects and the lowest point of the conductor as shown in Figure C.3.

Figure C.3 – Safe height between lowest point of conductor and other obstacle ("Safe Clearance")



C.2.7 The distance between adjacent pylons is termed the 'span length'. The span length is governed by a number of factors, the principal ones being pylon height, number and size of conductors (i.e. weight), ground contours and changes in route direction. A balance must therefore be struck between the size and physical presence of each tower versus the number of towers; this is a decision based on both visual and economic aspects. The typical 'standard' span length used by National Grid is approximately 360m.

C.2.8 Lower voltages need less clearance and therefore the pylons needed to support 132 kV lines are not as high as traditional 400 kV and 275 kV pylons. However, lower voltage circuits are unable to transport the same levels of power as higher voltage circuits.

C.2.9 National Grid has established operational processes and procedures for the design, construction, operation and maintenance of overhead lines. Circuits must be taken out of service from time to time for repair and maintenance. However, shorter emergency restoration times are achievable on overhead lines as compared, for example, to underground cables. This provides additional operational flexibility if circuits need to be rapidly returned to service to maintain a secure supply of electricity when, for example, another transmission circuit is taken out of service unexpectedly.

C.2.10 In addition, emergency pylons can be erected in relatively short timescales to bypass damaged sections and restore supplies. Overhead line maintenance and repair therefore does not significantly reduce security of supply risks to end consumers.

C.2.11 Each of the three main components that make up an overhead line has a different design life, which are:

- Between 40 and 50 years for overhead line conductors
- 80 years for pylons
- Between 20 and 40 years for insulators.

C.2.12 National Grid expects an initial design life of around 40 years, based on the specified design life of the component parts. However, pylons can be easily refurbished, and so substantial pylon replacement works are not normally required at the 40-year design life.

C.3 Underground Cables

C.3.1 Underground cables at 275 kV and 400 kV make up approximately 10% of the existing transmission system in England and Wales, which is typical of the proportion of underground to overhead equipment in transmission systems worldwide. Most of the underground cable is installed in urban areas where achieving an overhead route is not feasible. Examples of other situations where underground cables have been installed, in preference to overhead lines, include crossing rivers, passing close to or through parts of nationally designated landscape areas and preserving important views.

C.3.2 Underground cable systems are made up of two main components – the cable and connectors. Connectors can be cable joints, which connect a cable to another cable, or overhead line connectors in a substation.

C.3.3 Cables consist of an electrical conductor in the centre, which is usually copper or aluminium, surrounded by insulating material and sheaths of protective metal and plastic. The insulating material ensures that although the conductor is operating at a high voltage, the outside of the cable is at zero volts (and therefore safe). Figure C.4 shows a cross section of a transmission cable and a joint that is used to connect two underground cables.

Figure C.4 – Cable Cross-Section and Joint



C.3.4 Underground cables can be connected to above-ground electrical equipment at a substation, enclosed within a fenced compound. The connection point is referred to as a cable sealing end. Figure C.5 shows two examples of cable sealing end compounds.

Figure C.5 – Cable Sealing End Compounds



C.3.5 An electrical characteristic of a cable system is capacitance between the conductor and earth. Capacitance causes a continuous ‘charging current’ to flow, the magnitude of which is dependent on the length of the cable circuit (the longer the cable, the greater the charging current) and the operating voltage (the higher the voltage the greater the current). Charging currents have the effect of reducing the power transfer through the cable.

C.3.6 High cable capacitance also has the effect of increasing the voltage along the length of the circuit, reaching a peak at the remote end of the cable.

C.3.7 National Grid can reduce cable capacitance problems by connecting reactive compensation equipment to the cable, either at the ends of the cable, or, in the case of longer cables, at regular intervals along the route. Specific operational arrangements and switching facilities at points along the cable circuit may also be needed to manage charging currents.

C.3.8 Identifying faults in underground cable circuits often requires multiple excavations to locate the fault and some repairs require removal and installation of new cables, which can take a number of weeks to complete.

C.3.9 High voltage underground cables must be regularly taken out of service for maintenance and inspection and, should any faults be found and depending on whether cable excavation is required, emergency restoration for security of supply reasons typically takes a lot longer than for overhead lines (days rather than hours).

C.3.10 The installation of underground cables requires significant civil engineering works. These make the construction times for cables longer than overhead lines.

C.3.11 The construction swathe required for two AC routes comprising two cables per phase will be between 35-50 m wide.

C.3.12 Each of the two main components that make up an underground cable system has a design life of between 40 and 50 years.

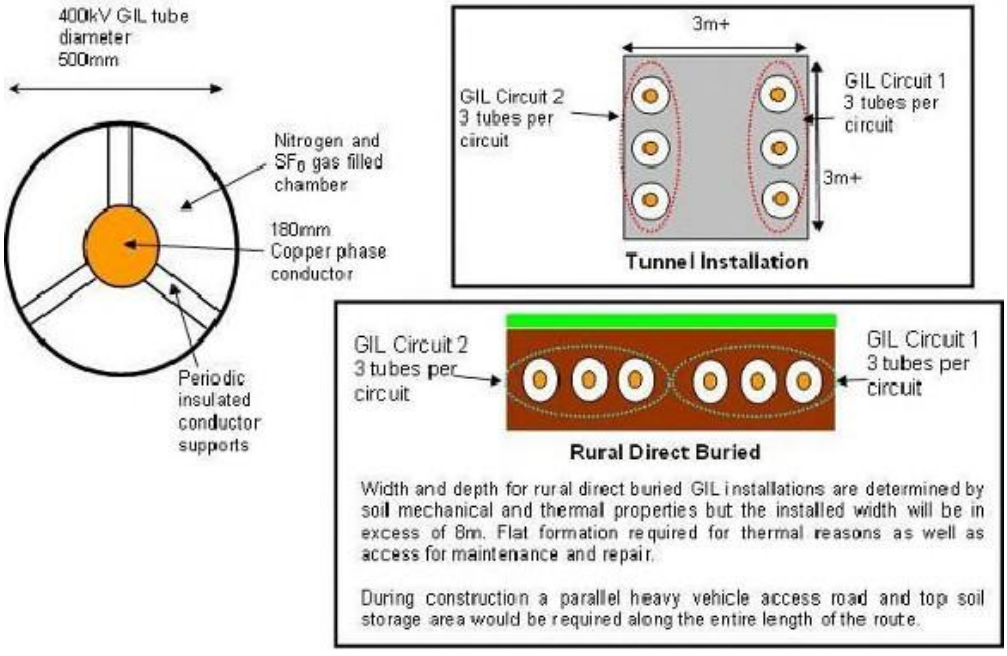
C.3.13 Asset replacement is generally expected at the end of design life. However, National Grid's asset replacement decisions (that are made at the end of design life) will also take account of actual asset condition and may lead to actual life being longer than the design life.

C.4 Gas Insulated Lines ("GIL")

C.4.1 GIL is an alternative to underground cable for high voltage transmission. GIL has been developed from the well-established technology of gas-insulated switchgear, which has been installed on the transmission system since the 1960s.

C.4.2 GIL uses a mixture of nitrogen and sulphur hexafluoride (SF6) gas to provide the electrical insulation. GIL is constructed from welded or flanged metal tubes with an aluminium conductor in the centre. Three tubes are required per circuit, one tube for each phase. Six tubes are therefore required for two circuits, as illustrated in Figure C.6 below.

Figure C.6 – Key Components of GIL



C.4.3 GIL tubes are brought to site in 10 – 20 m lengths and they are joined in situ. It is important that no impurities enter the tubes during construction as impurities can cause the gas insulation to fail. GIL installation methods are therefore more onerous than those used in, for example, natural gas pipeline installations.

C.4.4 A major advantage of GIL compared to underground cable is that it does not require reactive compensation.

C.4.5 The installation widths over the land can also be narrower than cable installations, especially where more than one cable per phase is required.

C.4.6 GIL can have a reliability advantage over cable in that it can be re-energised immediately after a fault (similar to overhead lines) whereas a cable requires investigations prior to re-energisation. If the fault was a transient fault, it will remain energised and if the fault was permanent the circuit will automatically and safely de-energise again.

C.4.7 There are environmental concerns with GIL as the SF_6[28] gas used in the insulating gas mixture is a potent 'greenhouse gas'. Since SF6 is an essential part of the gas mixture GIL installations are designed to ensure that the risk of gas leakage is minimised.

C.4.8 There are a number of ways in which the risk of gas leakage from GIL can be managed, which include:

- use of high-integrity welded joints to connect sections of tube;
- designing the GIL tube to withstand an internal fault; and
- splitting each GIL tube into a number of smaller, discrete gas zones that can be independently monitored and controlled.

C.4.9 At decommissioning the SF_6 can be separated out from the gas mixture and either recycled or disposed of without any environmental damage.

C.4.10 GIL is a relatively new technology and therefore has limited historical data, meaning that its operational performance has not been empirically proven. National Grid has two GIL installations on the transmission system which are 545 m and 150 m long[29]. These are both in electricity substations; one is above ground and the other is in a trough. The longest directly buried transmission voltage GIL in the world is approximately one kilometre long and was recently installed on the German transmission system around Frankfurt Airport.

C.4.11 In the absence of proven design life information, and to promote consistency with assessment of other technology options, National Grid assesses GIL over a design life of up to 40 years.

[28] SF_6 is a greenhouse gas with a global warming potential, according to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, Working Group 1 (Climate Change 2007, Chapter 2.10.2), of 22,800 times that of CO2. www.ipcc.ch/publications_and_data/ar4/wg1/en/ch2s2-10-2.html

[29] The distances are based on initial manufacturer estimates of tunnel and buried GIL dimensions which would be subject to full technical appraisal by National Grid and manufacturers to achieve required ratings which may increase the separation required. It should be noted that the diagram does not show the swathe of land required during construction. Any GIL tunnel installations would have to meet the detailed design requirements of National Grid for such installations.

C.5 High Voltage Direct Current ("HVDC")

C.5.1 HVDC technology can provide efficient solutions for the bulk transmission of electricity between AC electricity systems (or between points on an electricity system).

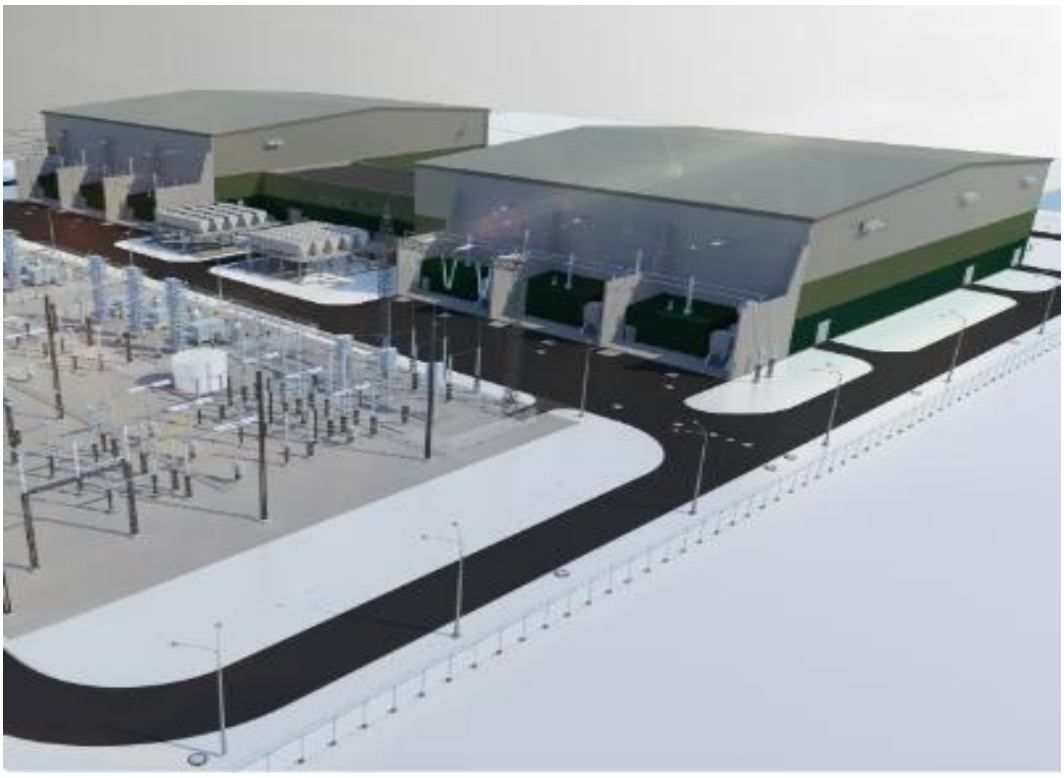
C.5.2 There are circumstances where HVDC has advantages over AC, generally where transmission takes place over very long distances or between different, electrically-separate systems, such as between Great Britain and countries in Europe such as France, Belgium, The Netherlands, Ireland etc.

C.5.3 HVDC links may also be used to connect a generating station that is distant from the rest of the electricity system. For example, very remote hydro-electric schemes in China are connected by HVDC technology with overhead lines.

C.5.4 Proposed offshore wind farms to be located over 60 km from the coast of Great Britain are likely to be connected using HVDC technology as an alternative to an AC subsea cable. This is because AC subsea cables over 60 km long have a number of technical limitations, such as high charging currents and the need for mid-point compensation equipment.

C.5.5 The connection point between AC and DC electrical systems has equipment that can convert AC to DC (and vice versa), known as a converter. The DC electricity is transmitted at high voltage between converter stations. Convertor stations can use two types of technology. "Classic" or Current Source Convertors (CSC) were the first type of HVDC technology developed, and this design was used for National Grid's Western Link. Voltage Source Convertors (VSC) are a newer design and offer advantages over the previous CSC convertors, as they can better support weaker systems and offer more flexibility in the way they operate, including direction of power flow.

Figure C.7 – VSC convertor Station



C.5.6 HVDC can offer advantages over AC underground cable, such as:

- a minimum of two cables per circuit is required for HVDC whereas a minimum of three cables per circuit is required for AC.
- reactive compensation mid-route is not required for HVDC.
- cables with smaller cross-sectional areas can be used (compared to equivalent AC system rating).

C.5.7 This allows HVDC cables to be more easily installed for subsea applications than AC cables for a given capacity.

C.5.8 HVDC cables are generally based upon two technology types; Mass Impregnated and Extruded technologies. VSC technology may utilise either technology type, whereas CSC technology tends to be limited to Mass Impregnated cables due to the way poles are reversed for change of power flow direction.

Figure C.8 – HVDC Cable Laying Barge at transition between shore and sea cables



C.5.9 HVDC systems have a design life of about 40 years. This design life period is on the basis that large parts of the converter stations (valves and control systems) would be replaced after 20 years.

Appendix D
Economic Appraisal

nationalgrid

Appendix D Economic Appraisal

D.1 Introduction

D.1.1 As part of the economic appraisal of Strategic Options, NGET makes comparative assessments of the lifetime costs associated with each technology option that is considered to be feasible.

D.1.2 This section provides an overview of the methods that NGET uses to estimate lifetime costs as part the economic appraisal of a Strategic Option. It also provides a summary of generic capital cost information for transmission system circuits for each technology option included in Appendix C and an overview of the method that NGET uses to assess the Net Present Value ("NPV") of costs that are expected to be incurred during the lifetime of new transmission assets.

D.1.3 The Institution of Engineering and Technology (IET) produced a report "A Comparison of Electricity Transmission Technologies" in 2025[30]. This IET report presents cost information in size of transmission circuit capacity categories for each circuit design that was considered as part of the independent study in a 2023 cost base. To aid comparison between the cost data presented in the IET Report and that used by NGET for appraisal of Strategic Options, this appendix includes cost estimates using National Grid cost data for circuit designs that are equivalent to those considered as part of the independent study. Examples in this appendix are presented using the category size labels of "Low", "Medium" and "High" used in the IET Report.

D.2 Financial Year 2025/26 RIIO-T3 Update

D.2.1 National Grid has started a new regulatory transmission funding period known as RIIO-T3, The Office of Gas and Electricity Markets (OFGEM) set these periods to review the funding for the next 5 years from April 1st, 2026, to March 31st, 2031. As part of this period National Grid submits an updated business plan that provides updated cost information. As part of Our Strategic Options process, we revise our comparative cost information at the start of each period.

D.2.2 The following section explains all the changes that have occurred to transmission costs since our previous cost base 2020/21 used in our previous Strategic Options Reports and their Updates. And provides a transparent mechanism to explain how cost have changed over the period and how numbers can be translated between 2020/21 base to a 2025/26 historical base cost.

D.2.3 Table D.1 below shows the inflation rate applied across financial years to National Grid Cost Base, as provided in our RIIO-T3 submission to Ofgem. This inflation table is used to inflate costs from our previous 2020/21 cost base to the new RIIO-T3 period cost base of 2025/26.

Table D.1 – Inflation Adjustment Between 2020/21 cost base and 2025/26 cost base

[30] The Institution of Engineering and Technology (IET) - A Comparison of Electricity Transmission Technologies report https://www.theiet.org/media/axwkktkb/100110238_001-rev-j-electricity-transmission-costs-and-characteristics_final-full.pdf

Annual Financial Year Inflation Rate from previous Base 2020/21 cost to new 2025/26 Base Cost						
2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	**New Base Overall Increase**
Previous Base	4.47%	8.77%	5.55%	3.29%	3.41%	**28.11%**

D.2.4 In addition to the general inflation set out in Table D.1 above there have also been technology-based increases above the rate of inflation that have occurred over the period. Table D.2 provides a technology-based overview of overall percentage cost increases seen between 2020/21 and 2025/26.

Table D.2 – Overall Above Inflation Percentage Increase by technology between 2020/21 cost base and 2025/26 cost base

Technology Type	Above Inflation Increase (%)
Overhead line	6%
Underground Cable	8%
Gas Insulated Line (GIL)	25%
Cable Mid-Point Switching Stations	15%
Reactors	25%
Interbus Super Grid Transformers (SGT) (400/275kV)	25%
HVDC Convertors	35%
HVDC Cables	35%

D.2.5 The increases in the above technologies are due to many factors, including above inflation rises in materials and commodity costs; higher labour costs; limited manufacturing capacity and high demand; higher energy costs. Material and Energy intensive technologies have seen the highest rises. Whilst High Voltage Direct Current (HVDC) technologies, which are material intensive, have also seen high market demand which has caused increased costs with lots of worldwide projects competing for limited manufacturing capacity.

D.2.6 As part of our update, we have also undertaken development work of a number of major HVDC projects over the past 5 years including the Eastern Green Link 1 (EGL 1) and Eastern Green Link 2 (EGL 2) projects. Detailed development of these projects and subsequent tender processes has identified clearly the costs between subsea HVDC cable installation and on-shore HVDC cable installation. Table D.3 below shows the cost increase to install cables on-shore compared to the offshore base cost.

Table D.3 – HVDC Cable Percentage Cost increase for On-shore Installation

Subsea HVDC cable Installation	On-shore HVDC Cable Installation increase (%)
Base	60%

D.2.7 On-shore installation costs are 60% higher due to the increased costs involved installing cables on-shore. Subsea cables are installed using ocean going vessels carrying circa 100km of HVDC cable per campaign. On-shore cables have to be delivered by road in lengths of circa 1km due to the weight and size of the cable drums. They require more groundworks and more jointing of the shorter cable sections, along with the management of road, rail and river crossings that often require more expensive installation techniques such as directional drilling. All of these factors led to the observed on-shore installation costs 60% higher than subsea being seen as part of our fully developed projects.

D.3 Lifetime Costs for Transmission

D.3.1 For each technology option appraised within a Strategic Option, NGET estimates total lifetime costs for the new transmission assets. The total lifetime cost estimate consists of the sum of the estimates of the:

- initial capital cost of developing, procuring, installing and commissioning the new transmission assets, and
- net present value ("NPV") of costs that are expected to be incurred during the lifetime of these new transmission assets

D.4 Capital Cost Estimates

D.4.1 At the initial appraisal stage, NGET prepares indicative estimates of the capital costs. These indicative estimates are based on the high-level scope of works defined for each Strategic Option in respect of each technology option that is considered to be feasible. As these estimates are prepared before detailed design work has been carried out, NGET takes account of equivalent assumptions for each option. Final project costs for any solution taken forward following detailed design and risk mitigation will be in excess of any high-level appraisal cost. However, all options would incur these increases in the development of a detailed solution.

D.4.2 This section considers the capital costs in two parts, firstly the AC technology costs are discussed, followed by HVDC technologies. Each of these technologies is described in Appendix C in more detail.

D.5 AC Technology Capital Cost Estimates

D.5.1 Table D.4 shows the category sizes that are relevant for AC technology circuit designs:

Table D.4 – AC Technology Circuit Designs

Category	Design	Rating
Low	Two AC circuits of 1,595 MVA	3,190 MVA
Medium	Two AC circuits of 3,190 MVA	6,380 MVA
High	Two AC circuits of 3,465 MVA	6,930 MVA

D.5.2 Table D.5 provides a summary of technology configuration and capital cost information (in financial year 2025/26 prices) for each of the AC technology options that NGET considers as part of an appraisal of Strategic Options.

Table D.5 – A Technology Configuration and National Grid Capital Costs by Rating

IET, PB/CCI Report short-form label	Circuit Ratings by Voltage		Technology Configuration			Capital Costs		
	275kV AC Technologies	400kV AC Technologies	Overhead Line (OHL)	AC Underground Cable (AC Cable)	Gas Insulated Line (GIL)	Overhead Line (OHL)	AC Underground Cable (AC Cable)	Gas Insulated Line (GIL)
	Total rating for two Circuits (2 x rating of each circuit)	Total rating for two Circuits (2 x rating of each circuit)	No. of Conductors Sets "bundles" on each arm/circuit of a pylon	No. of Cables per phase	No of direct buried GIL tubes per phase	Cost for a "double" two circuit pylon route (Cost per circuit, of a double circuit pylon route)	Cost for a two-circuit AC cable route (Cost per circuit, of a two-circuit AC cable route)	Cost for a two-circuit GIL route (Cost per circuit, of a two-circuit GIL route)
Lo	3190MVA (2 x 1595MVA) [2000MVA 2 x 1000MVA for AC Cable only]	3190MVA (2 x 1595MVA)	2 conductor sets per circuit (6 conductors per circuit)	1 Cable per Phase (3 cables per circuit)	1 tube per phase (3 standard GIL tubes per circuit)	£4.51m/km (£2.25m/km)	£22.61m/km (£11.30m/km)	£42.95m/km (£21.47m/km)
Med	N/A	6380MVA (2 x 3190MVA)	2 conductor sets per circuit (6 conductors per circuit)	2 Cables per Phase (6 cables per circuit)	1 tube per phase (3 "developing" new large GIL tubes per circuit)	£4.94m/km (£2.47m/km)	£39.18m/km (£19.59m/km)	£49.83m/km (£24.92m/km)
Hi	N/A	6930MVA (2 x 3465MVA)	3 conductor sets per circuit (9 conductors per circuit)	3 Cables per Phase (9 cables per circuit)	2 tubes per phase (6 standard GIL tubes per circuit)	£5.40m/km (£2.70m/km)	£55.20m/km (£27.60m/km)	£69.27m/km (£34.64m/km)

Notes: -

1. Capital Costs for all technologies are based upon rural/arable land installation with no major obstacles (examples of major obstacles would be Roads, Rivers, Railways etc…)
2. All underground AC Cable and GIL technology costs are for direct buried installations only. AC cable and GIL Tunnel installations would have a higher capital installation cost than direct buried rural installations. However, AC cable or GIL replacement costs following the end of conductor life would benefit from re-use of the tunnel infrastructure.
3. AC cable installation costs exclude the cost of reactors and mid-point switching stations, which are described later in this appendix.
4. 275kV circuits will often require Super-Grid Transformers (SGT) to allow connection into the 400kV system, SGT capital costs are not included above but described later in this appendix.
5. 275kV AC cable installations above 1000MVA, as indicated in the table above, would require 2 cables per phase to be installed to achieve ratings of 1595MVA per circuit at 275kV.

D.5.3 Table D.5 provides a summary of the capital costs associated with the key[31] components of transmission circuits for each technology option. Additional equipment is required for technology configurations that include new:

- AC underground cable circuits
- Connections between 400 kV and 275 kV parts of the NGET's transmission system.

D.5.4 The following sections provide an overview of the additional requirements associated with each of these technology options and indicative capital costs of additional equipment.

D.6 AC Underground Cable additional equipment

D.6.1 Appendix C of this Report provides a summary of the electrical characteristics of AC underground cable systems and explains that reactive gain occurs on AC underground cables.

D.6.2 Table D.6 provides a summary of the typical reactive gain within AC underground cable circuits forming part of the NGET's transmission system.

Table D.6 – Reactive Gain Within AC underground cable circuits

Category	Voltage	Design	Reactive Gain per circuit
Lo	275 kV	One 2500 mm2 cable per phase	5 Mvar/km
Med	275 kV	Two 2500 mm2 cable per phase	10 Mvar/km
Lo	400 kV	One 2500 mm2 cable per phase	10 Mvar/km
Med	400 kV	Two 2500 mm2 cable per phase	20 Mvar/km
Hi	400 kV	Three 2500 mm2 cable per phase	30 Mvar/km

D.6.3 NGET is required to ensure that reactive gain on any circuit that forms part of its transmission system does not exceed 225 Mvar. Above this limit, reactive gain would lead to unacceptable voltages (voltage requirements as defined in the NETS SQSS). In order to manage reactive gain and therefore voltages, reactors are installed on AC underground cable circuits to ensure that reactive gain in total is less than 225 Mvar.

D.6.4 For example, a 50 km "Med" double circuit would have an overall reactive gain of 1000 Mvar per circuit (2000 Mvar in total for two circuits). The standard shunt reactor size installed at 400 kV on the National Grid transmission system is 200 Mvar. Therefore four 200 Mvar reactors (800 Mvar) need to be installed on each circuit or eight 200 Mvar reactors (1600 Mvar) reactors for the two circuits. Each of these reactors cost £8.7m adding £69.6m to an overall cable cost for the example double circuit above.

D.6.5 Mid-point switching stations may be required as part of a design to meet the reactive compensation requirements for AC underground cable circuit. The need for switching

[31] Components that are not required for all technology options are presented separately in this Appendix.

stations is dependent upon cable design, location and requirements which cannot be fully defined without detailed design.

D.6.6 For the purposes of economic appraisal of Strategic Options, NGET includes a cost allowance that reflects typical requirements for switching stations. These allowances shown in Table D.7 are:

Table D.7 – Switching Station Requirements for Reactive Gain Within AC underground cable circuits

Category	Switching Station Requirement
Lo	Reactive Switching Station every 60km between substations
Med	Reactive Switching Station every 30km between substations
Hi	Reactive Switching Station every 20km between substations

D.6.7 It is noted that more detailed design of AC underground cable systems may require a switching station after a shorter or longer distance than the typical values used by NGET at the initial appraisal stage.

D.6.8 Table D.8 below shows the capital cost associated with AC underground cable additional equipment.

Table D.8 – Additional costs associated with AC underground cables

Category	Cost per mid-point switching station	Cost per 200 Mvar reactor
Lo	£22.2m	£13.9m per reactor
Med	£27.2m	
Hi	£27.2m	

D.7 Connections between AC 275 kV and 400 kV circuits additional equipment

D.7.1 Equipment that transform voltages between 275kV and 400kV (a 400/275 kV supergrid transformer or “SGT”) is required for any new 275 kV circuit that connects to a 400 kV part of the National Grid’s transmission system (and vice versa). The number of supergrid transformers needed is dependent on the capacity of the new circuit. NGET can estimate the number of SGTs required as part of an indicative scope of works that is used for the initial appraisal of Strategic Options.

D.7.2 Table D.9 below shows the capital cost associated with the SGT requirements.

Table D.9 – Additional costs associated with 275kV circuits requiring connection to the 400kV system

275kV Equipment	Capital Cost (SGT - including civil engineering work)
400/275kV SGT 1100MVA (excluding switchgear)	£9.93m per SGT

D.8 High Voltage Direct Current ("HVDC") Capital Cost Estimates

D.8.1 Conventional HVDC technology sizes are not easily translated into the "Lo", "Med" and "Hi" ratings suggested in the IET, PB/CCI report. Whilst NGET information for HVDC is presented for each of these categories, there are differences in the circuit capacity levels. As part of an initial appraisal, NGET's assessment is based on a standard 2GW converter size. Higher ratings are achievable using multiple circuits.

D.8.2 The capital costs of HVDC installations can be much higher than for equivalent AC overhead line transmission routes. Each individual HVDC link, between each converter station, requires its own dedicated set of HVDC cables. HVDC may be more economic than equivalent AC overhead lines where the route length is many hundreds of kilometres.

D.8.3 Table D.10 provides a summary of technology configuration and capital cost information (in financial year 2025/26 prices) for each of the HVDC technology options that NGET considers as part of an appraisal of Strategic Options.

Table D.10 – HVDC Technology Capital Costs for 2GW installations

HVDC Converter Type	2 GW Total HVDC Link Converter Costs (Converter Cost at Each End)	2GW DC Cable Pair Cost (Offshore Installation)	2GW DC Cable Pair Cost (Onshore installation)
Current Source Technology or "Classic" HVDC	£821.5m HVDC link cost (£410.7m at each end)	£5.34m/km	£8.55m/km
Voltage Source Technology HVDC	£924.2m HVDC link cost (£462.1m at each end)	£5.34m/km	£8.55m/km

Notes:

Sometimes a different HVDC capacity (different from the required AC capacity) can be utilised for a project due to the different way HVDC technology can control power flow. The capacity requirements for HVDC circuits will be specified in any option considering HVDC. The cost shall be based upon Table D.10 above.

Where a single HVDC Link is proposed as an option, to maintain compliance with the NETS SQSS, there may be a requirement to install an additional "Earth Return" DC cable. For example, a 2GW Link must be capable of operating at ½ its capacity i.e. 1GW during maintenance or following a cable fault. To allow this operation the additional cable known as an "Earth Return" must be installed, this increases cable costs by a further 50%.

Capital Costs for HVDC cable installations are based upon large vessel subsea installation for offshore and for onshore installation rural/arable land installation with average expected obstacles (examples of major obstacles would be Subsea Pipelines, Roads, Rivers, Railways etc…)

D.9 Indication of Technology end of design life replacement impact

D.9.1 It is unusual for a part of National Grid's transmission system to be decommissioned and the site reinstated. In general, assets will be replaced towards the end of the assets design life. Typically, transmission assets will be decommissioned and removed only as part of an upgrade or replacement by different assets.

D.9.2 NGET does not take account of replacement costs in the lifetime cost assessment.

D.9.3 NGET's asset replacement decisions take account of actual asset condition. This may lead to actual life of any technology being longer or shorter than the design life, depending on the environment it is installed in, lifetime loading, equipment family failures among other factors for example.

D.9.4 The following provides a high-level summary of common replacement requirements applicable to specific technology options:

- OHL - Based on the design life of component parts, NGET assumes an initial design life of around 40 years for overhead line circuits. After the initial 40-year life of an overhead line circuit, substantial pylon replacement works would not normally be required. The cost of Pylons is reflected in the initial indicative capital costs, but the cost of replacement at 40 years would not include the pylon cost. As pylons have an 80-year life and can be re-used to carry new replacement conductors. The replacement costs for overhead line circuits at the end of their initial design life are assessed by NGET as being around 50% of the initial capital cost, through the re-use of pylons.
- AC underground Cable - At the end of their initial design life, circa 40 years, replacement costs for underground cables are estimated to be equal or potentially slightly greater than the initial capital cost. This is because of works being required to excavate and remove old cables prior to installing new cables in their place in some instances.
- GIL - At the end of the initial design life, circa 40 years, estimated replacement costs for underground GIL would be equal to or potentially greater than the initial capital cost. This is because of works being required to excavate and remove GIL prior to installing new GIL in their place in some instances.
- HVDC - It should be noted at the end of the initial design life, circa 40 years, replacement costs for HVDC are significant. This due to the large capital costs for the replacement of converter stations and the cost of replacing underground or subsea DC cables when required.

D.10 Net Present Value Cost Estimates

D.10.1 At the initial appraisal stage, NGET prepares estimates of the costs that are expected to be incurred during the design lifetime of the new assets. NGET considers costs associated with:

- Operation and maintenance
- Electrical losses

D.10.2 For both categories, Net Present Value ("NPV") calculations are carried out using annual cost estimates and a generic percentage discount rate over the design life period associated with the technology option being considered.

D.10.3 The design life for all technology equipment is outlined in the technology description in Appendix C. The majority of expected design lives are of the order of 40 years, which is used to assess the following NPV cost estimates below.

D.10.4 In general discount rates used in NPV calculations would be expected to reflect the normal rate of return for the investor. NGET's current rate of return is 6.25%.

However, the Treasury Green Book recommends a rate of 3.5% for the reasons set out below[32]

"Discounting in the public sector allows costs and benefits with different time spans to be compared on a common "present value" basis."

D.10.5 NGET considered the impact of using the lower Rate of Return (used by UK Government) on lifetime cost of losses assessments for transmission system investment proposals. Using the rate of 3.5% will discount loss costs, at a lower rate than that of 6.25%. This has the overall effect of increasing the 40-year cost of losses giving a more onerous cost of losses for higher loss technologies.

D.10.6 For the appraisal of Strategic Options, NGET recognises the value of closer alignment of its NPV calculations with the approach set out by government for critical infrastructure projects and aligns with this element but also notes that the totality of the Green Book applies only to public and government bodies.

D.11 Annual Operations and Maintenance Cost

D.11.1 The maintenance costs associated with each technology vary significantly depending upon type. Some electrical equipment is maintained regularly to ensure system performance is maintained. More complex equipment like HVDC converters have a significantly higher cost associated with them, due to their high maintenance requirements for replacement parts. Table D.11 shows the cost of maintenance for each technology, which unlike capital and losses is not dependent on capacity.

Table D.11 – Annual maintenance costs by Technology

	Overhead Line (OHL)	AC Underground Cable (AC Cable)	Gas Insulated Line (GIL)	High Voltage Direct Current (HVDC)
Circuit Annual maintenance cost per two circuit km (AC) (Annual cost per circuit Km [AC])	£3,408/km (£1,704/km)	£7,174/km (£3,587/km)	£3,433/km (£1,717/km)	£172/km HVDC Cables
Associated equipment Annual Maintenance cost per item	N/A	£8,583 per reactor £52,525 per switching station	N/A	£1,665,418 per convertor station
Additional costs for 275 kV circuits requiring connection to the 400kV system				
275/400 kV SGT 1100 MVA Annual maintenance cost per SGT	£8,608 per SGT			N/A

[32] The Green Book (2022) sets the government discount rate of 3.5% page 116 https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-green-book-appraisal-and-evaluation-in-central-government

D.12 Annual Electrical Losses and Cost

D.12.1 At a system level annual losses on the National Grid electricity system equate to less the 2% of energy transported. This means that over 98% of the energy entering the transmission system from generators/interconnectors reaches the bulk demand substations where the energy transitions to the distribution system. Electricity transmission voltages are used to reduce losses, as more power can be transported with lower currents at transmission level, giving rise to the very efficient loss level achieved of less than 2%. The calculations below are used to show how this translates to a transmission route.

D.12.2 Transmission losses occur in all electrical equipment and are related to the operation and design of the equipment. The main losses within a transmission system come from heating losses associated with the resistance of the electrical circuits, often referred to as I2R losses (the electrical current flowing through the circuit, squared, multiplied by the resistance). As the load (the amount of power each circuit is carrying) increases, the current in the circuit is larger.

D.12.3 The average load of a transmission circuit which is incorporated into the transmission system is estimated to be 34% (known as a circuit average utilisation). This figure is calculated from the analysis of the load on each circuit forming part of National Grid's transmission system over the course of a year. This takes account of varying generation and demand conditions and is an appropriate assumption for the majority of Strategic Options.

D.12.4 This level of circuit utilisation is required because if a fault occurs there needs to be an alternative route to carry power to prevent wide scale loss of electricity for homes, business, towns and cities. Such events would represent a very small part of a circuit's 40-year life, but this availability of alternative routes is an essential requirement at all times to provide secure electricity supplies to the nation.

D.12.5 In all AC technologies the power losses are calculated directly from the electrical resistance and impedance properties of each technology and associated equipment. Table D.12 provides a summary of circuit resistance data for each AC technology and capacity options considered in this Report.

Table D.12 – AC circuit technologies and associated resistance per circuit

IET, PB/CCI Report short-form label	AC Overhead Line Conductor Type (complete single circuit resistance for conductor set)	AC Underground Cable Type (complete single circuit resistance for conductor set)	AC Gas Insulated Line (GIL) Type (complete single circuit resistance for conductor set)
Lo	2 x 570 mm^2 (0.025 Ω/km)	1 x 2500 mm^2 (0.013 Ω/km*)	Single Tube per phase (0.0086 Ω/km)
Med	2 x 850 mm^2 (0.0184 Ω/km)	2 x 2500 mm^2 (0.0065 Ω/km*)	Single Tube per phase (0.0086 Ω/km)
Hi	3 x 700 mm^2 (0.014 Ω/km)	3 x 2500 mm^2 (0.0043 Ω/km*)	Two tubes per phase (0.0065 Ω/km)

IET, PB/CCI Report short-form label	AC Overhead Line Conductor Type (complete single circuit resistance for conductor set)	AC Underground Cable Type (complete single circuit resistance for conductor set)	AC Gas Insulated Line (GIL) Type (complete single circuit resistance for conductor set)
Losses per 200Mvar Reactor required for AC underground cables			
Reactor Losses	N/A	0.4MW per reactor	N/A
Additional losses for 275kV circuits requiring connection to the 400 kV system			
275 kV options only 275/400 kV SGT losses	0.2576 Ω (plus 83 kW of iron losses) per SGT	0.2576 Ω (plus 83 kW of iron losses) per SGT	0.2576 Ω (plus 83 kW of iron losses) per SGT

D.12.6 The process of converting AC power to DC is not 100% efficient. Power losses occur in all elements of the converter station: the valves, transformers, reactive compensation/filtering and auxiliary plant. Manufacturers typically represent these losses in the form of an overall percentage. Table D.13 below shows the typical percentage losses encountered in the conversion process, ignoring losses in the DC cable circuits themselves.

Table D.13 – HVDC circuit technologies and associated resistance per circuit

HVDC Converter Type	2 GW Converter Station losses	2GW DC Cable Pair Losses	2GW Total Link loss
Current Source (CSC) Technology or “Classic” HVDC	0.5% per converter	Ignored	1% per HVDC Link
Voltage Source (VSC) Technology HVDC	1.0% per converter	Ignored	2% per HVDC Link

D.12.7 The example calculation explained in detail below is for “Med” category circuits and has been selected to demonstrate the principles of the mathematics set out in this section. This example does not describe specific options set out within this report. A detailed example explanation of the calculations used to calculate AC losses is included in Appendix E.

D.12.8 The circuit category, for options contained within this report, is set out within each option. The example below demonstrates the mathematics and principles, which is equally applicable to “Lo”, “Med” and “Hi” category circuits, over any distance.

D.12.9 The example calculations (using calculation methodology described in Appendix) of instantaneous losses for each technology option for an example circuit of 40 km “Med” capacity 6380 MVA (two x 3190 MVA).

- Overhead Lines = (2 x 3) x 1565.5 A2 x (40 x 0.0184 Ω/km) = 10.8 MW

- Underground Cable = (2 x 3) x1565.5 A^2 x (40 x 0.0065 Ω/km) + (6 x 0.4MW) = 6.2 MW
- Gas Insulated Lines = (2 x 3) x 1565.5 A2 x (40 x 0.0086 Ω/km) = 5.1 MW
- CSC HVDC = 34% x 6380 MW x 1% = 21.7 MW
- VSC HVDC = 34% x 6380 MW x 2% = 43.4 MW

D.12.10 An annual loss figure can be calculated from the instantaneous loss. NGET multiplies the instantaneous loss figure by the number of hours in a year and also by the cost of energy. NGET uses £60/MWhr.

D.12.11 The following is a summary of NGET's example calculations of Annual Losses and Maintenance costs for each technology option for an example circuit of 40 km "Med" capacity 6380 MVA (two x 3190 MVA).

- Overhead Line annual loss = 10.8 MW x 24 x 365 x £60/MWhr = £5.7m.
- U-ground Cable annual loss = 6.2 MW x 24 x 365 x £60/MWhr = £3.3m.
- Gas Insulated lines annual loss = 5.1 MW x 24 x 365 x £60/MWhr = £2.7m
- CSC HVDC annual loss = 21.7 MW x 24 x 365 x £60/MWhr = £11.4m
- VSC HVDC annual loss = 43.4 MW x 24 x 365 x £60/MWhr = £22.8m

D.13 Example Lifetime costs and NPV Cost Estimate

D.13.1 The annual Operation, Maintenance and loss information is assessed against the NPV model at 3.5% over 40 years and added to the capital costs to provide a lifetime cost for each technology.

D.13.2 Table D.14 shows an example for a "Medium" capacity route 6380 MVA (2 x 3190 MVA) 400 kV, 40 km in length on-shore over 40 years.

Table D.14 – Example Lifetime Cost table (rounded to the nearest £m)

Example 400 kV "Med" Capacity over 40km	Overhead Line (OHL)	AC Underground Cable (AC Cable)	Gas Insulated Line (GIL)	CSC High Voltage Direct Current (HVDC)	VSC High Voltage Direct Current (HVDC)
Capital Cost	£197.6m	£1,622.8m	£1,993.6m	£3,491.3m	£3,797.3m
NPV Loss Cost over 40 years at 3.5% discount rate	£125.0m	£62.6 m	£58.4 m	£235.6 m	£471.2m
NPV Maintenance Cost over 40 years at 3.5% discount rate	£2.99m	£7.07m	£3.02m	£220.02m	£220.02m
Lifetime Cost	£326m	£1,692m	£2,055m	£3,947m	£4,489m

Appendix E Mathematical Principles used for AC Loss Calculation

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Appendix E Mathematical Principles used for AC Loss Calculation

E.1 Introduction

E.1.1 This Appendix provides a detailed description of the mathematical formulae and principles that National Grid applies when calculating transmission system losses. The calculations use recognised mathematical equations which can be found in power system analysis text books.

E.1.2 The example calculation explained in detail below is for “Med” category circuits and has been selected to demonstrate the principles of the mathematics set out in this section. This example does not describe specific options set out within this report.

E.1.3 The circuit category, for options contained within this report, is set out within each option. The example below demonstrates the mathematics and principles, which is equally applicable to “Lo”, “Med” and “Hi” category circuits, over any distance.

E.2 Example Loss Calculation (1) – 40 km 400 kV “Med” Category Circuits

E.2.1 The following is an example loss calculation for a 40 km 400 kV “Med” category (capacity of 6,380 MVA made up of two 3,190 MVA circuits).

E.2.2 Firstly, the current flowing in each of the two circuits is calculated from the three-phase power equation of $P= \sqrt{3}V_{LL}I_{LL} \cos \theta$. Assuming a unity power factor ($\cos \theta= 1$), the current in each circuit can be calculated using a rearranged form of the three-phase power equation of:

(In a star (Y) configuration electrical system $I = I_{LL} = I_{LN}$)

$I = P/\sqrt{3}V_{LL}$

Where, P is the circuit utilisation power, which is 34% of circuit rating as set out in D.40 of Appendix D, which for the each of the two circuits in the “Med” category example is calculated as:

P = 34% x 3190 MVA = 1,084.6 MVA

and, V_{LL} is the line-to-line voltage which for this example is 400 kV.

For this example, the average current flowing in each of the two circuits is:

$I = 1,084.6 \times 106/(\sqrt{3} \times 400 \times 103) = 1,565.5$ Amps

E.2.3 The current calculated above will flow in each of the phases of the three-phase circuit. Therefore, from this value it is possible to calculate the instantaneous loss which occurs at the 34% utilisation loading factor against circuit rating for any AC technology.

E.2.4 For this “Med” category example, the total resistance for each technology option is calculated (from information in Appendix D, Table D.10) as follows:

Overhead Line = 0.0184Ω/km x 40 km = 0.736 Ω

Cable Circuit[33] = 0.0065Ω/km x 40 km = 0.26 Ω

Gas Insulated Line = 0.0086Ω/km x 40 km = 0.344 Ω

These circuit resistance values are the total resistance seen in each phase of that particular technology taking account the number of conductors needed for each technology option.

E.2.5 The following is a total instantaneous loss calculation for the underground cable technology option for the "Med" category example:

Losses per phase are calculated using $P=I^2R$

1,565.52 x 0.26 = 0.64 MW

Losses per circuit are calculated using $P=3I^2R$

3 x 1,565.52 x 0.26 = 1.91 MW

Losses for "Med" category are calculated by multiplying losses per circuit by number of circuits in the category.

2 x 1.91 MW = 3.8 MW

E.2.6 For underground cable circuits, three reactors per circuit are required (six in total for the two circuits in the "Med" category). Each of these reactors has a loss of 0.4 MW. The total instantaneous losses for this "Med" category example with the underground cable technology option are assessed as:

3.8 + (6 x 0.4) = 6.2 MW

E.2.7 The same methodology is applied for the other AC technology option types for the "Med" category example considered in this Appendix. The following is a summary of the instantaneous total losses that were assessed for each technology option:

Overhead Lines = (2 x 3) x 1,565.52 x 0.736 = 10.8 MW

Cables = (2 x 3) x 1,565.52 x 0.26 + (6 x 0.4) = 6.2 MW

Gas Insulated Lines = (2 x 3) x 1,565.52 x 0.344 = 5.1 MW

E.3 Example Loss Calculation (2) – 40 km 275 kV "Lo" Category Circuits Connecting to a 400 kV part of the National Grid's transmission system

E.3.1 The following is an example loss calculation for a 40 km 275 kV "Lo" category (capacity of 3,190 MVA made up of two 1,595 MVA circuits) and includes details of how losses of the supergrid transformer ("SGT") connections to 400 kV circuits are assessed. This example assesses the losses associated with the GIL technology option up to a connection point to the 400 kV system.

E.3.2 The circuit utilisation power (P) which for the each of the two circuits in the "Lo" category example is calculated as:

[33] A 40 km three phase underground cable circuit will also require three reactors to ensure that reactive gain is managed within required limits.

P = 34% x 1,595 = 542.3 MVA

For this example, the average current flowing in each of the two circuits is:

$I = 542.3x10^6/(\sqrt{3} \times 275x10^3) = 1{,}138.5$ Amps

E.3.3 For this "Lo" category example, the total resistance for the GIL technology option is calculated (from information in Appendix D, Table D.10) as follows:

0.0086Ω/km x 40 km = 0.344 Ω

E.3.4 The following is a total instantaneous loss calculation for the GIL technology option for this "Lo" category example:

Losses per circuit are calculated using $P=3I^2R$

3 x 1138.5 x 0.344 = 1.35 MW

Losses for "Lo" category 275 kV circuits are calculated by multiplying losses per circuit by number of circuits in the category

2 x 1.35 MW = 2.7 MW

E.3.5 SGT losses also need to be included as part of the assessment for this "Lo" category example which includes connection to 400 kV circuits. SGT resistance[34] is calculated (from information in Appendix D, Table D.10) as 0.2576 Ω.

E.3.6 The following is a total instantaneous loss calculation for the SGT connection part of this "Lo" category example:

The average current flowing in each of the two SGT 400 kV winding are calculated as:

$I_{HV} = 542.3 \times 10^6/(\sqrt{3} \times 400x10^3) = 782.7$ Amps

Losses per SGT are calculated using $P=3I^2R$

SGT Loss = 3 x 782.7 x 0.2576 = 0.475 MW

Iron Losses in each SGT = 84kW

Total SGT instantaneous loss (one SGT per GIL circuit) = (2 x 0.475) + (2 x 0.084) = 1.1 MW.

E.3.7 For this example, the total "Lo" category loss is the sum of the calculated GIL and SGT total loss figures:

"Lo" category loss = 2.7 + 1.1 = 3.8 MW

[34] Resistance value referred to the 400 kV side of the transformer.

Appendix F
Glossary of Terms and Acronyms

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Appendix F Glossary of Terms and Acronyms

Acronym / Term	Definition
AC	Alternating Current
AC Cable	AC Underground Cable
ACS	Average Cold Spell
AIS	Air Insulated Switchgear
AONB	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
ASTI	Accelerated Strategic Transmission Investment
Availability Factor	The time a generator is able to produce electricity over a period of time divided by that period of time
CION	Connection and Infrastructure Options Note
Conductor	Used to transport power
CSC	Current Source Converter
CSNP	Centralised Strategic Network Plan
DC	Direct Current
DCO	Development Consent Order issued under the Planning Act 2008
DESNZ	Department for Energy Security and Net Zero, the ministerial department with primary responsibility for energy.
Electricity Act	The Electricity Act 1989
EN-1	Overarching National Policy Statement for Energy
EN-3	National Policy Statement for Renewable Energy Infrastructure
EN-5	National Policy Statement for Electricity Network Infrastructure
EN-6	National Policy Statement for Nuclear Power Generation (Superseded by EN-7)
EN-7	National Policy Statement for Nuclear Energy Generation
ETYS	Electricity Ten-Year Statement sets out the Electricity System Operator's view of future transmission requirements and where the capability of the transmission network might need to be addressed over the next decade.
FES	Future Energy Scenarios represent different credible scenarios for the transition to a cleaner greener energy future by 2050.
GIL	Gas Insulated Lines
GIS	Gas Insulated Switchgear

Acronym / Term	Definition
HND	Holistic Network Design, a publication by ESO issued in July 2022 setting out a single integrated transmission network design that supports the large-scale delivery of electricity generated from offshore wind by 2030
HND FUE	Holistic Network Design Follow Up Exercise, an updated publication of the HND.
HVDC	High Voltage Direct Current
IET, PB/CCI Report	An independent report endorsed by the Institution of Engineering and Technology by Parsons Brinckerhoff in association with Cable Consulting International
Insulators	Used to safely connect conductors to pylons
IPC	Infrastructure Planning Commission
NGET	National Grid Electricity Transmission plc
Net zero	UK Government's commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to net zero by 2050 as per the Climate Change Act 2008 (2050 Target Amendment) Order 2019. Net zero means any emissions that cannot be avoided would be balanced by schemes to offset an equivalent amount of greenhouse gases from the atmosphere.
NETS SQSS	National Electricity Transmission System Security and Quality of Supply Standard
NESO	Operator of National Electricity Transmission System, the National Energy System Operator
NOA	Network Options Assessment
NPR	Network Planning Review
NPS	National Policy Statements
NPV	Net Present Value
NSIP	Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project
Ofgem	The Office of Gas and Electricity Markets
OHL	Overhead Line
Pylons	Used to support conductors
RIBA	Royal Institute of British Architects
SAC	Special Areas for Conservation
SF6	Sulphur Hexafluoride (gas used to provide electrical insulation)
SGT	Super-Grid Transformer

Acronym / Term	Definition
SOR	Strategic Options Report
Span length	Distance between adjacent pylons
SPA	Special Protection Areas
SP Energy Networks	SP Transmission plc is a wholly owned subsidiary of Scottish Power (SP) Energy Networks responsible for the transmission of electricity in central and southern Scotland.
SQSS	Security and Quality of Supply Standard. This sets out the criteria and methodology for planning and operating the transmission system.
SSEN	Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks (SSEN) Transmission is the trading name for Scottish Hydro Electric Transmission responsible for the electricity transmission network in the north of Scotland
SSSI	Sites of Special Scientific Interest
STC	System Operator – Transmission Owner Code
SGT	Super-Grid Transformer
Substation	Transmission substations are found where electricity enters the power grid to convert generator outputs to a level that suits its means of transmission
The Authority	Gas and Electricity Markets Authority, the governing body of Ofgem
TO	Transmission Owner
T-pylon	Monopole pylon design developed by National Grid
Transmission Licence	Licence granted under Section 6(1)(b) of the Electricity Act
volt (V)	The electrical unit of potential difference 1 kilovolt (kV) = 1,000volts
watt (W)	The SI unit of power 1 kilowatt (kW) = 1,000watts 1 megawatt (MW) = 1,000kW 1 gigawatt (GW) = 1,000MW
XLPE	Cross Linked Polyethylene (solid material used to provide electrical insulation)

Appendix G Strategic Study Area Options Overview: Environmental and Socio-economic Appraisal

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Appendix G Strategic Study Area Options Overview: Environmental and Socio-economic Appraisal

G.1 Introduction

G.1.1 Each of the shortlisted strategic options have been appraised in accordance with National Grid's Approach to Consenting. Environmental and socio-economic issues have been informed by desk study information and constraints mapping. For each strategic option, a study area has been established within which the strategic option could reasonably be expected to be developed. Figures illustrating the study areas for each of the options are included within this Appendix.

G.1.2 The high-level options appraisal has had particular regard for internationally or nationally important sites and other features that are of a sufficient scale and importance to inform decision-making at a regional level. Detailed environmental assessments have been undertaken, and continue to inform the design, routeing, siting and development consent processes following the selection of the preferred strategic proposal.

G.2 ECO-1 Creyke Beck to High Marnham (Westward Direction)

G.2.1 In order to undertake the environmental and socio-economic appraisal of the ECO-1 (West) option, a study area was established in which the project could reasonably be expected to be developed. For ECO-1 (West), it was identified that a straight-line route direct from Creyke Beck to High Marnham would be unrealistic due to the densely built-up urban centre of Kingston Upon Hull; routeing of any new infrastructure would need to avoid this area. The study area encompasses an area approximately 20km wide based on a broad route west from Creyke Beck around Kingston upon Hull and then southwards to High Marnham. Sites and features that might constrain the development of an OHL for the option are detailed below.

ECO-1 (Westward Direction) Environmental Appraisal

Landscape and Visual Appraisal

G.2.2 The nature of the landscape of the study area, with the exception of the Yorkshire Wolds in the north, is predominantly low-lying flat lands, under intensive agriculture, with smaller areas of gentle relief. The Yorkshire Wolds National Trail crosses the Wolds within the northern portion of the study area.

G.2.3 Whilst it should be possible to avoid some potential adverse effects on the landscape and visual amenity, the Yorkshire Wolds (currently identified as an Important Landscape Area in the East Riding Local Plan 2012 - 2029) would need to be crossed by this option.

G.2.4 Consideration would need to be given to the potential benefits of running in close parallel to the existing 4ZQ 400kV OHL to reduce the impacts of introducing a new OHL route into the landscape, although this also has potential to intensify the appearance of wirescape in the landscape.

G.2.5 Natural England are proposing to designate a new Yorkshire Wolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). A Provisional Candidate Area was released as part of an initial public consultation June 2022 to obtain feedback on the proposals. Subsequently Natural England held a formal Statutory and Public Consultation on the proposed boundary for the new Yorkshire Wolds AONB between October 2024 and January 2025. The southernmost extent of the proposed AONB boundary is located to the north of Market Weighton and is hence outside the Creyke Beck to High Marnham study area. Based on this information, AONB designation of the area of the Yorkshire Wolds within the study area is not anticipated.

G.2.6 West of the Wolds and along the Trent Valley, the generally open intensive agricultural landscape means that there is wide visibility, however the landscape is likely to be able to accommodate an OHL with limited disturbance to landscape character. There is potential to use, or parallel with, the existing ZDA 400kV OHL to avoid introducing a new OHL route, although this has potential to intensify the appearance of wirescape in the landscape. The presence of urban areas and the River Trent adjacent to the east of the ZDA 400kV OHL may limit routeing opportunities.

G.2.7 It is likely some residual permanent effects would occur for residents along affected settlement edges and at scattered properties due to the number present within the study area. There is also potential for some adverse visual effects on users of the National Trail.

G.2.8 This option is constrained in relation to landscape and visual considerations, with a number of opportunities to avoid constraints and for mitigation through more detailed assessment and siting which would prevent and/or reduce potential for adverse landscape and visual effects.

Historic Environment Appraisal

G.2.9 There are a number of scheduled monuments scattered throughout the study area. It is anticipated that direct impacts on these historic assets can be avoided through careful routeing due to their scattered nature.

G.2.10 A large number of listed buildings have been recorded throughout the study area, with the vast majority being Grade II listed, with fewer Grade I and II* listed buildings. The majority of these are associated with the settlements scattered throughout the study area.

G.2.11 There are a limited number of registered parks and gardens within the study area. These include Risby Hall and Thwaite Hall at the northern end of the study area, and Doddington Hall at the southern end of the study area.

G.2.12 It is likely that listed buildings and registered parks and gardens could be avoided by selecting appropriate route corridors and sensitive routeing.

G.2.13 Physical impacts are likely to be limited to non-designated assets and previously unrecorded assets, although these have not been assessed as part of this options appraisal.

G.2.14 Whilst designated heritage assets are likely to be avoidable there is the potential for significant impacts on the setting of such assets depending on the proximity of the OHL.

G.2.15 Mitigation is expected to be required and could include a phased programme of works including geophysical survey, archaeological evaluation trenching, and archaeological excavation to mitigate physical impacts to non-designated assets / previously unrecorded assets.

Biological Environment Appraisal

G.2.16 The Humber Estuary Special Area of Conservation (SAC), Special Protection Area (SPA), Ramsar site and Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) between Creyke Beck and High Marnham presents a major constraint for the routeing of the new OHL alignment; these designated sites extend from east to west across the study area. The sites also extend south along the River Trent. There are a number of RSPB Reserves within the study area including Read's Island and Blacktoft Sands associated with the Humber Estuary, and Beckingham Marshes to the west of Gainsborough. There is potential for adverse effects on important habitats and breeding bird populations associated with the Humber Estuary. Paralleling the existing 4ZQ 400kV OHL route to the west of Kingston-Upon-Hull and south over the River Ouse would potentially reduce impacts on protected species, including potential bird strikes.

G.2.17 The Thorne and Hatfield Moors SPA and Important Bird Area (IBA), Thorne Moor SAC, Hatfield Moor SAC, Hatfield Moors SSSI, Thorne, Crowle and Goole Moors SSSI, Humberhead Peatlands National Nature Reserve and Laughton Forest IBA are located within the central section of the study area. Whilst these sites are avoidable there is the potential for adverse effects on the interest features (habitats and species) for which a number of these sites are designated both during construction and operation.

G.2.18 There would be a need to follow the Habitats Regulations Assessment process to consider the effects of a crossing of the Humber. This would also need to encompass impacts upon Thorne and Hatfield Moors SPA/SAC depending upon distance. Any project would need to demonstrate that it would not affect the integrity of these designated sites. Based on the information available at this stage of the project's development, it is considered that a route could be identified at the routing and siting stage that would not affect the integrity of designated sites (once appropriate mitigation was taken into account). If this is not possible, localised undergrounding could be used to avoid or mitigate unacceptable effects where necessary. Benefits from undergrounding to mitigate bird collision and mortality would need to be considered comparatively with potential adverse impacts that may arise from land and habitat disturbance due to undergrounding within, and in close proximity to, designated sites.

G.2.19 There are a number of additional SSSIs within the study area including Scotton and Laughton Forest Ponds SSSI, Laughton SSSI, Risby Warren SSSI, as well as a number located along linear features such as ditches and canals. There are also several areas of ancient woodland scattered throughout the study area. It is anticipated that direct impacts on these designated assets can be avoided through careful routeing due to their scattered nature.

Physical Environment Appraisal

G.2.20 Any OHL route between Creyke Beck and High Marnham would have to cross over several unavoidable watercourses and associated floodplains including the River Ouse. There is an opportunity to parallel the existing 4ZQ 400kV OHL which crosses

the River Ouse and to parallel the existing ZDA 400kV OHL which crosses the River Don. Any OHL would run parallel to the River Trent which flows to the north through the study area. There could be a need for multiple crossings of this river to avoid other constraints. Areas of Groundwater Source Protection Zones (GSPZ) are present within the study area and are largely concentrated within and around Creyke Beck.

G.2.21 Flood Zones 2 and 3 cover a large section of the study area. Given the extent of Flood Zones 2 and 3 across the study area, it is likely that a significant amount of development would be located within the floodplain.

G.2.22 Crossings of main rivers, Flood Zone 2 or 3 and GSPZ are expected to be unavoidable. Standard protection measures would need to be applied during the construction phase and consider the areas of GSPZ and flood risk zones within the study area. Foundations would need to be designed accordingly.

ECO 1 (Westward Direction) Socio-economic Appraisal

Settlements and Populations Appraisal

G.2.23 There are a number of large urban areas within the study area including Kingston-Upon-Hull, Scunthorpe and Gainsborough as well as numerous smaller settlements scattered throughout which are a constraint for routeing and siting. There is an opportunity to parallel the existing 4ZQ 400kV OHL and the existing ZDA 400kV OHL to avoid urban areas; however, the presence of existing settlements may limit opportunities for paralleling of these existing 400kV OHLs.

G.2.24 Temporary adverse impacts associated with noise, air quality and construction traffic could arise if the new OHL is situated within proximity to settlements during construction. There is the potential for some adverse visual effects which are set out in the landscape and visual appraisal.

G.2.25 The study area has a large amount of best and most versatile (BMV) agricultural land considered to be an economic resource. This includes areas of Grade 1 BMV land particularly south of the Humber and along the Trent Valley. Grade 3 BMV agricultural land is the most prominent land type classification within the study area south of Gainsborough. Temporary effects on agricultural land would occur during the construction phase. A small percentage of agricultural land would be permanently lost due to the footprint of the pylons. Standard best practice guidelines should be followed to reinstate agricultural land following construction.

Tourism and Recreation Appraisal

G.2.26 The Yorkshire Wolds National Trail crosses the northern portion of the study area crossing the Wolds. There are a number of National Cycle Networks (NCN) routes located within the northern portion of the study area including the Trans Pennine Trail which extends from east to west across the study area, as well as an NCN in the central portion of the study area in proximity to Scunthorpe.

G.2.27 There is the potential for temporary adverse effects associated with severance should the National Trail and NCN routes need to be temporarily closed during construction; however, effects would be temporary. There is the potential for some permanent adverse visual effects on users of the National Trail which are set out in the landscape and visual appraisal.

G.2.28 Standard best practice guidelines should be followed to provide appropriate signage, diversion routes and notices for users of NCN routes and National Trails should part of these routes be closed during construction.

G.2.29 There are three Country Parks within the study area: Waters Edge and Humber Bridge Country Parks located either side of the Humber Estuary, and Normanby Hall located north of Scunthorpe. These sites are considered to be avoidable.

Infrastructure Appraisal

G.2.30 The road network within the study area comprises major routes including the M62, M18 and M180 which connect the large settlements of Goole, Thorne, Stainforth and Hatfield. Both the M180 and M62/A63 would need to be crossed by the new OHL.

G.2.31 There are also a number of trunk roads within the study area some of which would need to be crossed where they extend across the study area from east to west.

G.2.32 There are also several railway lines running within the study area including a number that would be unavoidable and would need to be crossed.

G.2.33 The crossing of roads and railways overhead is unlikely to be a major constraint given the required above ground clearance levels of the new OHL.

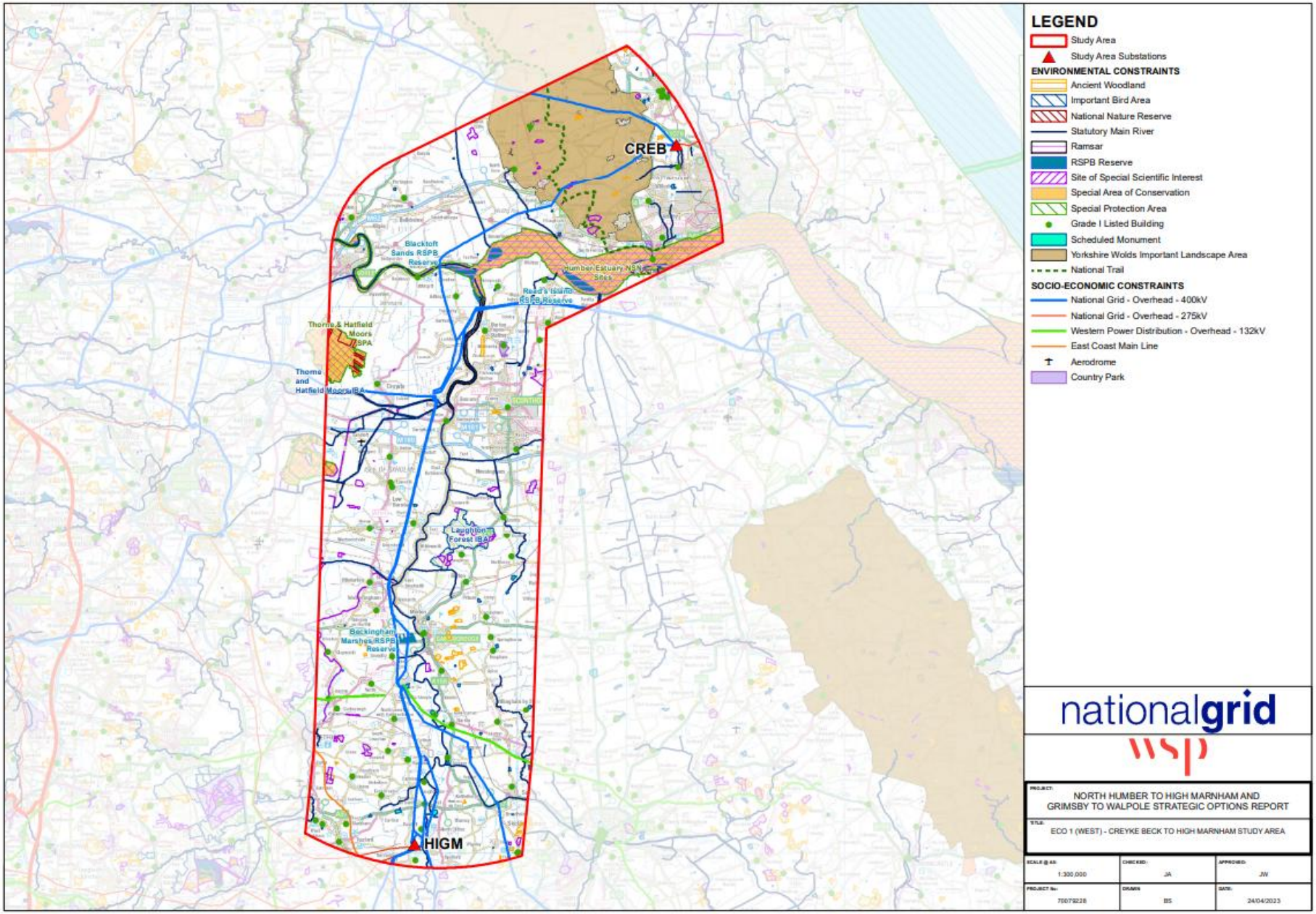
G.2.34 There are numerous airfields within the study area. The airfields are considered to be avoidable.

G.2.35 There is potential for aircraft flightpaths to cross the study area. The study area is partially within the 30km Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) suggested safeguarding zone for Doncaster Sheffield Airport and the 17km safeguarding zone for Retford Gamston Airport. All of the study area is located within a Ministry of Defence (MoD) low flying zone, the majority of which is low priority but also including an area of high priority. Part of the southern portion of the study area is within a Met Radar Zone.

G.2.36 Aircraft flightpaths would need to be considered when routeing and siting the pylons. Aviation warning lighting may be required on the pylons. Mitigation may be necessary for the Met Radar Zone.

ECO-1 (Westward Direction) Summary

G.2.37 Overall, this option is relatively constrained in relation to both ecological, landscape and visual considerations. The OHL would cross the Humber Estuary SPA, SAC, Ramsar and SSSI with potential for direct effects on breeding, over-wintering and passage bird species (collision risk) that are a qualifying feature of these designations. Whilst Thorne and Hatfield Moors SPA and IBA, Thorne Moor SAC, Hatfield Moor SAC, Hatfield Moors SSSI, Thorne, Crowle and Goole Moors SSSI, and Laughton Forest IBA are avoidable there is the potential for adverse effects on the interest features (habitats and species) for which a number of these sites are depending on routeing. Any project would need to demonstrate that it would not affect the integrity of designated sites. Based on the information available at this stage of the project's development, it is considered that a route could be identified at the routing and siting stage that would not affect the integrity of designated sites (once appropriate mitigation was taken into account). The OHL would also cross the Yorkshire Wolds Important Landscape Area. There would however be opportunities through more detailed assessment to prevent and/or reduce the potential for adverse effects. Other key environmental and socio-economic constraints are considered to be less influential with the potential to mitigate adverse impacts through careful consideration of routeing and siting and the use of appropriate technologies.


LEGEND
Study Area
Study Area Substations
ENVIRONMENTAL CONSTRAINTS
Ancient Woodland
Important Bird Area
National Nature Reserve
Statutory Main River
Ramsar
RSPB Reserve
Site of Special Scientific Interest
Special Area of Conservation
Special Protection Area
Grade I Listed Building
Scheduled Monument
Yorkshire Wolds Important Landscape Area
National Trail
SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONSTRAINTS
National Grid - Overhead - 400kV
National Grid - Overhead - 275kV
Western Power Distribution - Overhead - 132kV
East Coast Main Line
Aerodrome
Country Park
CREB
HIGM
Blacktoft Sands RSPB Reserve
Humber Estuary NNR and Sites
Reed's Island RSPB Reserve
Thorne & Hatfield Moors SPA
Thorne and Hatfield Moors IBA
Laughton Forest IBA
Beckingham Marshes RSPB Reserve
nationalgrid
wsp
NORTH HUMBER TO HIGH MARNHAM AND GRIMSBY TO WALPOLE STRATEGIC OPTIONS REPORT
ECO 1 (WEST) - CREYKE BECK TO HIGH MARNHAM STUDY AREA
1:300,000
JA
JW
70079228
BS
24/04/2023

G.3 ECO-1 Creyke Beck to High Marnham (Eastward Direction)

G.3.1 In order to undertake the environmental and socio-economic appraisal of the ECO-1 (East) option, a study area was established in which the project could reasonably be expected to be developed. For ECO-1 (East), it was identified that a straight-line route direct from Creyke Beck to High Marnham would be unrealistic due to the densely built-up urban centre of Kingston Upon Hull; routeing of any new infrastructure would need to avoid this area. The study area encompasses an area approximately 20km wide based on a broad route east from Creyke Beck around Kingston upon Hull and then south-west to High Marnham sites and features that might constrain the development of an OHL for the option are detailed below.

ECO-1 (Eastward Direction) Environmental Appraisal

Landscape and Visual Appraisal

G.3.2 The nature of the landscape of the study area is predominantly open expansive landscapes under intensive agriculture, with simple landscape patterns. There is little major development outside the main settlements, particularly in the wider area east of Kingston-Upon-Hull and through the centre of the area south of the Humber. The Lincolnshire Wolds AONB encroaches into the eastern edge of the study area but would be avoided.

G.3.3 The generally low-lying open character with long views increases the risk of wide visibility, however the same open character can allow tall structures to be absorbed. The OHL would need to be routed taking into account the pattern of the landscape to avoid settlements, visitor attractions and long-distance open views (particularly from high ground) as far as possible. It is assumed that this option would require a 6km cable in a tunnel beneath the Humber.

G.3.4 Visibility of the new 400kV OHL is likely to be extensive due to the low-lying open character of the landscape. However, it is considered that the existing landscape patterns are unlikely to be disturbed by the introduction of a new 400kV OHL.

G.3.5 There is an opportunity to parallel the YYW 275kV OHL to the east of Kingston-Upon-Hull to reduce the impacts of introducing a new OHL route into the landscape. Similarly, there is also an option to consider replacement of the existing YYW 275kV OHL with the new OHL route.

G.3.6 Further south, the density of existing overhead lines may lead to the creation of a wirescape in the Trent valley.

G.3.7 It is likely some residual permanent effects would occur for residents along affected settlement edges and at scattered properties due to the number present within the study area.

Historic Environment Appraisal

G.3.8 There are a number of scheduled monuments scattered throughout the study area It is anticipated that direct impacts on these historic assets can be avoided through careful routeing due to their scattered nature.

G.3.9 A large number of listed buildings have been recorded throughout the study area, with the vast majority being Grade II listed, with fewer Grade I and II* listed buildings.

The majority of these are associated with the settlements scattered throughout the study area.

G.3.10 There are a limited number of registered parks and gardens within the study area. These include Burton Constable north of the Humber, Brocklesby Park south of the Humber, and Fillingham Castle, Hackthorn Hall and Doddington Hall in the southern portion of the study area.

G.3.11 It is likely that listed buildings and registered parks and gardens could be avoided by selecting appropriate route corridors and sensitive routeing.

G.3.12 Whilst designated heritage assets are likely to be avoidable there is the potential for adverse impacts on the setting of such assets depending on the proximity of the OHL.

G.3.13 Physical impacts are likely to be limited to non-designated assets and previously unrecorded assets, although these have not been assessed as part of this options appraisal.

G.3.14 Mitigation is expected to be required and could include a phased programme of works including geophysical survey, archaeological evaluation trenching, and archaeological excavation to mitigate physical impacts to non-designated assets / previously unrecorded assets.

Biological Environment Appraisal

G.3.15 The Humber Estuary SAC, SPA, Ramsar site and SSSI between Creyke Beck and High Marnham presents a major constraint for the routeing of the new OHL alignment; these designated sites extend from east to west across the study area. It is assumed that this option would require a 6km cable in a tunnel beneath the Humber. Any tunnelling, whilst removing the impact of bird strike, could still have negative effects upon the Humber Estuary through disturbance and potential hydrogeological impacts particularly if above-ground infrastructure associated with tunnelling is sited close to the Humber.

G.3.16 There would be a need to follow the Habitats Regulations Assessment process to consider the effects on qualifying species. Any project would need to demonstrate that it would not affect the integrity of the Humber Estuary designated sites. Based on the information available at this stage of the project's development, it is considered that a route could be identified at the routing and siting stage that would not affect the integrity of designated sites (once appropriate mitigation was taken into account).

G.3.17 The opportunity to parallel the YYW 275kV OHL east of Kingston-Upon-Hull should be considered to reduce the impacts of introducing a new OHL route. Similarly, there is also an option to consider replacement of the existing YYW 275kV OHL with the new OHL route.

G.3.18 There are a number of additional SSSIs within the study area including Lea Marsh SSSI, Kingerby Beck Meadows SSSI and Normanby Meadow SSSI. There are several areas of ancient woodland scattered throughout the study area, particularly to the east of Gainsborough. It is anticipated that direct impacts on these designated sites can be avoided through careful routeing due to their scattered nature.

Physical Environment Appraisal

G.3.19 Any OHL route between Creyke Beck and High Marnham would have to cross over several unavoidable watercourses and associated floodplains including the River Trent near High Marnham and rivers around Creyke Beck.

G.3.20 Areas of GSPZ are present throughout the study area.

G.3.21 Areas of Flood Zones 2 and 3 extend across the study area mainly associated with the Humber, the River Trent and the River Ancholme.

G.3.22 Crossings of main rivers, Flood Zone 2 or 3 and GSPZ are expected to be unavoidable. Standard protection measures would need to be applied during the construction phase and consider the areas of GSPZ and flood risk zones within the study area. Foundations would need to be designed accordingly.

ECO 1 (Eastward Direction) Socio-economic Appraisal

Settlements and Populations Appraisal

G.3.23 The large urban area of Kingston-Upon-Hull presents a constraint for routeing of a new OHL south between Creyke Beck and the Humber. There is an opportunity for the new 400kV OHL to parallel the YYW 275kV OHL to the east of Kingston-Upon-Hull to allow avoidance of this urban area. However, urban sprawl and future major allocations should be a consideration to the north and east of Kingston-Upon-Hull given the limited space between the YYW 275kV OHL and the outskirts of the urban area. There is also an option to consider replacement of the existing YYW 275kV OHL with the new OHL route.

G.3.24 The area to the south of the Humber is not as densely populated and urban areas would be less of a constraint for routeing in this area. The area around the Port of Hull and Port of Immingham is congested with existing infrastructure and may be a constraint for routeing and siting.

G.3.25 Temporary adverse impacts associated with noise, air quality and construction traffic could arise if the OHL is situated within proximity to settlements during construction. There is the potential for some adverse visual effects which are set out in the landscape and visual appraisal.

G.3.26 The study area has a large amount of BMV agricultural land considered to be an economic resource. This includes areas of Grade 1 and Grade 2 BMV land south of the Humber. Grade 3 BMV agricultural land is the most prominent land type classification within the southern section of the study area. Temporary effects on agricultural land would occur during the construction phase. A small percentage of agricultural land would be permanently lost due to the footprint of the pylons. Standard best practice guidelines should be followed to reinstate agricultural land following construction.

Tourism and Recreation Appraisal

G.3.27 There are a number of NCN routes located within the northern portion of the study area in the vicinity of Kingston-Upon-Hull, as well as an NCN which crosses from east to west across the extent of the study area south of the Humber.

G.3.28 There is the potential for temporary adverse effects associated with severance should the NCN routes need to be temporarily closed during construction; however, effects would be temporary.

G.3.29 Standard best practice guidelines should be followed to provide appropriate signage, diversion routes and notice for the users of the NCN routes should part of these routes be closed during construction.

G.3.30 There is one Country Park within the study area: Burton Constable. This site is considered to be avoidable.

Infrastructure Appraisal

G.3.31 The road network within the study area includes the M180, however this could potentially be avoided depending on routeing. There are also trunk roads within the study area, a number of which would need to be crossed where they extend across the study area from east to west.

G.3.32 There are several railway lines running within the study area mainly in and around the Port of Hull and Port of Immingham. A number of these would be unavoidable and would need to be crossed.

G.3.33 The crossing of roads and railways overhead is unlikely to be a major constraint given the required above ground clearance levels of the new OHL.

G.3.34 The Port of Hull and the Port of Immingham are located in the northern section of the study area and would present a constraint to routeing.

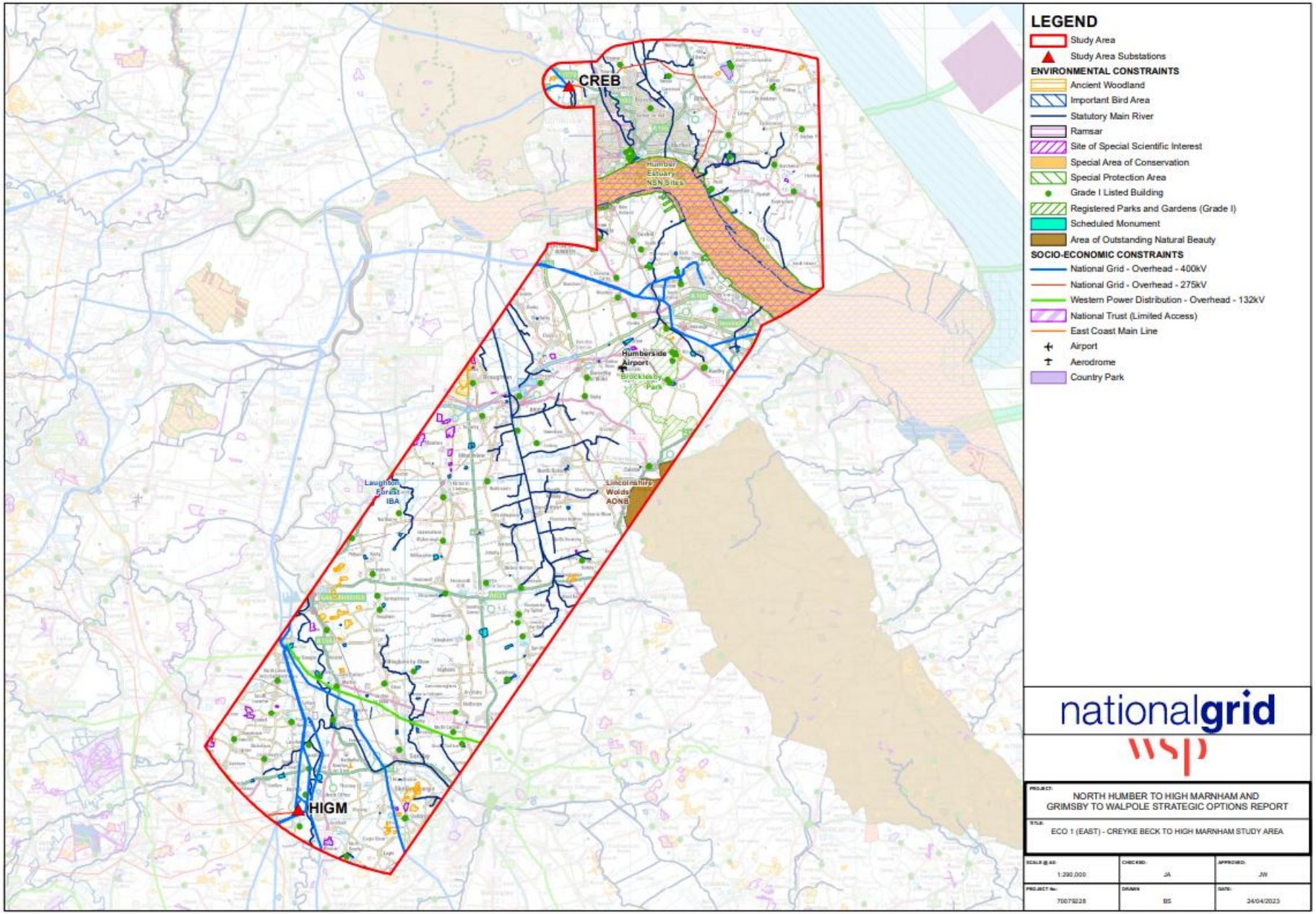
G.3.35 Humberside Airport and Aerodrome and RAF Kirton and RAF Scampton are located within the study area. There are also numerous additional airfields within the study area. The Airport/Aerodrome, RAF bases and airfields would be considered to be avoidable.

G.3.36 There is potential for aircraft flightpaths to cross the study area. The study area is partially within the 17km CAA suggested safeguarding zone for Humberside Airport, the 30km safeguarding zone for Doncaster Sheffield Airport, the 17km safeguarding zone for Retford Gamston Airport and the 5km safeguarding zone. All of the study area is located within a MoD low flying zone, the majority of which is low priority but also including an area of high priority. Part of the southern portion of the study area is within a Met Radar Zone.

G.3.37 Aircraft flightpaths would need to be considered when routeing and siting the pylons. Aviation warning lighting may be required on the pylons. Mitigation may be necessary for the Met Radar Zone.

ECO-1 (Eastward Direction) Summary

G.3.38 Overall, this option is relatively constrained in relation to ecological considerations. Tunnelling beneath the Humber, whilst removing the impact of bird strike, could still have adverse effects upon the Humber Estuary through disturbance and potential hydrogeological impacts. Any project would need to demonstrate that it would not affect the integrity of designated sites. Based on the information available at this stage of the project's development, it is considered that a route could be identified at the routing and siting stage that would not affect the integrity of designated sites (once appropriate mitigation was taken into account). There is potential for adverse effects on the setting of a number of Registered Parks and Gardens including Brocklesby Park as a result of a new OHL, although it is likely that any such effects could be avoided through careful routeing. Other key environmental and socio-economic constraints are considered to be less influential with the potential to mitigate adverse impacts through careful consideration of routeing and siting and the use of appropriate technologies.


CREB
HIGM
Humber Estuary NSN Sites
Humberside Airport
Brocklesby Park
Lincolnshire Wolds AONB
Laughton Forest IBA
LEGEND
Study Area
Study Area Substations
ENVIRONMENTAL CONSTRAINTS
Ancient Woodland
Important Bird Area
Statutory Main River
Ramsar
Site of Special Scientific Interest
Special Area of Conservation
Special Protection Area
Grade I Listed Building
Registered Parks and Gardens (Grade I)
Scheduled Monument
Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONSTRAINTS
National Grid - Overhead - 400kV
National Grid - Overhead - 275kV
Western Power Distribution - Overhead - 132kV
National Trust (Limited Access)
East Coast Main Line
Airport
Aerodrome
Country Park
nationalgrid
NORTH HUMBER TO HIGH MARNHAM AND GRIMSBY TO WALPOLE STRATEGIC OPTIONS REPORT
ECO 1 (EAST) - CREYKE BECK TO HIGH MARNHAM STUDY AREA
1:200,000
JA
JW
70079228
BS
24/04/2023

G.4 ECO-2 Creyke Beck to Cottam (Westward Direction)

G.4.1 In order to undertake the environmental and socio-economic appraisal of the ECO-2 (West) option, a study area was established in which the project could reasonably be expected to be developed. For ECO-2 (West), it was identified that a straight-line route direct from Creyke Beck to Cottam would be unrealistic due to the densely built-up urban centre of Kingston Upon Hull; routeing of any new infrastructure would need to avoid this area. The study area encompasses an area approximately 20km wide based on a broad route west from Creyke Beck around Kingston upon Hull and then southwards to Cottam. The appraisal assumes that the substation equipment required at Creyke Beck and Cottam would be delivered by others hence new substation works are excluded from this option; the appraisal does however assume a requirement for a new Sealing End Compound at Cottam. Sites and features that might constrain the development of this option are detailed below.

G.5 ECO-2 (Westward Direction) Environmental Appraisal

Landscape and Visual Appraisal

G.5.1 The nature of the landscape of the study area, with the exception of the Yorkshire Wolds in the north, is predominantly low-lying flat lands, under intensive agriculture, with smaller areas of gentle relief. The Yorkshire Wolds National Trail crosses the Wolds within the northern portion of the study area.

G.5.2 Whilst it should be possible with this option to avoid some potential adverse effects on the landscape and visual amenity, the Yorkshire Wolds (currently identified as an Important Landscape Area in the East Riding Local Plan 2012 - 2029) would need to be crossed by the option.

G.5.3 Consideration would need to be given to the potential benefits of running in close parallel to the existing 4ZQ 400kV OHL in this landscape to reduce the impacts of introducing a new OHL route into the landscape, although this also has potential to intensify the appearance of wirescape in the landscape.

G.5.4 Natural England are proposing to designate a new Yorkshire Wolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). A Provisional Candidate Area was released as part of an initial public consultation in June 2022 to obtain feedback on the proposals. Subsequently Natural England held a formal Statutory and Public Consultation on the proposed boundary for the new Yorkshire Wolds AONB between October 2024 and January 2025. The southernmost extent of the proposed AONB boundary is located to the north of Market Weighton and is hence outside the study area. Based on existing this information, AONB designation of the area of the Yorkshire Wolds within the study area is not anticipated. West of the Wolds and along the Trent Valley, the generally open intensive agricultural landscape means that there is wide visibility, however the landscape is likely to be able to accommodate an OHL with limited disturbance to landscape character. There is potential to use, or parallel with, the existing ZDA 400kV OHL to avoid introducing a new OHL route, although this has potential to intensify the appearance of wirescape in the landscape.

G.5.5 It is likely some residual permanent effects would occur for residents along affected settlement edges and at scattered properties due to the number present within the study area. There is also potential for some adverse visual effects on users of the National Trail.

G.5.6 This option is constrained in relation to landscape and visual considerations, with a number of opportunities to avoid constraints and for mitigation through more detailed assessment and siting which would prevent and/or reduce potential for adverse landscape and visual effects.

Historic Environment Appraisal

G.5.7 There are a number of scheduled monuments scattered throughout the study area including three scheduled monuments (Fleet Plantation moated site, Site of medieval town and Torksey Castle) located within 2km of the existing Cottam substation. It is anticipated that direct impacts on scheduled monuments can be avoided through careful routeing and siting due to their scattered nature.

G.5.8 A large number of listed buildings have been recorded throughout the study area, with the vast majority being Grade II listed, with fewer Grade I and II* listed buildings. The majority of these are associated with the settlements scattered throughout the study area. These include listed buildings approximately 1.5km to the north, south and west of the existing Cottam substation boundary within and close to the villages of Cottam, Church Laneham and Rampton respectively and approximately 2km to the east of the substation boundary within and close to the village of Torksey

G.5.9 There are two registered parks and gardens within the northern portion of the study area: Risby Hall and Thwaite Hall.

G.5.10 It is likely that listed buildings and registered parks and gardens could be avoided by sensitive routeing and siting.

G.5.11 Whilst designated heritage assets are likely to be avoidable there is the potential for adverse impacts on the setting of such assets depending on the proximity of the OHL and new Sealing End Compound infrastructure required at Cottam.

G.5.12 Physical impacts are likely to be limited to non-designated assets and previously unrecorded assets, although these have not been assessed as part of this options appraisal.

G.5.13 Mitigation is expected to be required and could include a phased programme of works including geophysical survey, archaeological evaluation trenching, and archaeological excavation to mitigate physical impacts to non-designated assets / previously unrecorded assets. The design of any above ground infrastructure required, as well as screening/planting, could potentially mitigate impacts on the setting of designated assets where relevant.

Biological Environment Appraisal

G.5.14 The Humber Estuary SAC, SPA, Ramsar site and SSSI between Creyke Beck and High Marnham presents a major constraint for the routeing of the new OHL alignment; these designated sites extend from east to west across the study area. The sites also extend south along the River Trent. There are a number of RSPB Reserves within the study area including Read's Island and Blacktoft Sands associated with the Humber Estuary, and Beckingham Marshes to the west of Gainsborough. There is potential for adverse effects on important habitats and breeding bird populations associated with the Humber Estuary. Paralleling the existing 4ZQ 400kV OHL route to the west of Kingston-Upon-Hull and south over the River Ouse would potentially reduce impacts on protected species, including potential bird strikes.

G.5.15 The Thorne and Hatfield Moors SPA and IBA, Thorne Moor SAC, Hatfield Moor SAC, Hatfield Moors SSSI, Thorne, Crowle and Goole Moors SSSI, Humberhead Peatlands National Nature Reserve and Laughton Forest IBA are located within the central section of the study area. Whilst these sites are avoidable there is the potential for adverse effects on the interest features both habitats and species for which a number of these sites are designated both during construction and operation.

G.5.16 There would be a need to follow the Habitats Regulations Assessment process to consider the effects of a crossing of the Humber. This would also need to encompass impacts upon Thorne and Hatfield Moors SPA/SAC depending upon distance. Any project would need to demonstrate that it would not affect the integrity of these designated sites. Based on the information available at this stage of the project's development, it is considered that a route could be identified at the routing and siting stage that would not affect the integrity of designated sites (once appropriate mitigation was taken into account). If this is not possible, localised undergrounding could be used to avoid or mitigate unacceptable effects where necessary. Benefits from undergrounding to mitigate bird collision and mortality would need to be considered comparatively with potential adverse impacts that may arise from land and habitat disturbance due to undergrounding within, and in close proximity to, designated sites.

G.5.17 There are a number of additional SSSIs within the study area including Scotton and Laughton Forest Ponds SSSI, Laughton SSSI, Risby Warren SSSI, as well as a number along linear features such as ditches and canals. There are also several areas of ancient woodland scattered throughout the study area. It is anticipated that direct impacts on these designated assets can be avoided through careful routeing due to their scattered nature.

G.6 Physical Environment Appraisal

G.6.1 Any OHL route between Creyke Beck and Cottam would have to cross over several unavoidable watercourses and associated floodplains including the River Ouse. There is an opportunity to parallel the existing 4ZQ 400kV OHL which crosses the River Ouse and to parallel the existing ZDA 400kV OHL which crosses the River Don. Any OHL would run parallel to the River Trent which flows to the north through the study area. There could be a need for multiple crossings of this river to avoid other constraints.

G.6.2 Areas of GSPZ are present within the study area and are largely concentrated within and around Creyke Beck.

G.6.3 Flood Zones 2 and 3 cover a large section of the study area including areas around the existing Cottam substation. Given the extent of Flood Zones 2 and 3 across the study area, it is likely that a significant amount of development would be located within the floodplain.

G.6.4 Crossings of main rivers, Flood Zone 2 or 3 and GSPZ are expected to be unavoidable. Areas of Flood Zone 2 or 3 are expected to be a constraint for the siting of new Sealing End Compound infrastructure at Cottam. Standard protection measures would need to be applied during the construction phase and consider the areas of GSPZ and flood risk zones within the study area. Foundations would need to be designed accordingly.

G.7 ECO 2 (Westward Direction) Socio-economic Appraisal

Settlements and Populations Appraisal

G.7.1 There are a number of large urban areas within the study area including Kingston-Upon-Hull, Scunthorpe and Gainsborough together with numerous smaller settlements scattered throughout which are a constraint for routeing and siting. There is an opportunity to parallel the existing 4ZQ 400kV OHL and the existing ZDA 400kV OHL to avoid urban areas; however, the presence of existing settlements may limit opportunities for paralleling of the existing 400kV OHLs.

G.7.2 Temporary adverse impacts associated with noise, air quality and construction traffic could arise if the OHL is situated within proximity to settlements during construction. There is the potential for some adverse visual effects which are set out in the landscape and visual appraisal.

G.7.3 The study area has a large amount of BMV agricultural land considered to be an economic resource. This includes areas of Grade 1 BMV land particularly south of the Humber and along the Trent Valley. Grade 3 BMV agricultural land is the most prominent land type classification within the study area south of Gainsborough. Temporary effects on agricultural land would occur during the construction phase. A small percentage of agricultural land would be permanently lost due to the footprint of the pylons. Standard best practice guidelines should be followed to reinstate agricultural land following construction.

Tourism and Recreation Appraisal

G.7.4 The Yorkshire Wolds National Trail crosses the northern portion of the study area crossing the Wolds. There are a number of NCN routes located within the northern portion of the study area including the Trans Pennine Trail which extends from east to west across the study area, as well as an NCN in the central portion of the study area in proximity to Scunthorpe.

G.7.5 There is the potential for temporary adverse effects associated with severance should the National Trail and NCN routes need to be temporarily closed during construction; however, effects would be temporary. There is the potential for some adverse visual effects on users of the National Trail which are set out in the landscape and visual appraisal, and these effects would be permanent.

G.7.6 Standard best practice guidelines should be followed to provide appropriate signage, diversion routes and notice for the users of the NCN routes and National Trail should part of these routes be closed during construction.

G.7.7 There are three Country Parks within the study area: Waters Edge and Humber Bridge Country Parks located either side of the Humber Estuary, and Normanby Hall located north of Scunthorpe. These sites are considered to be avoidable.

Infrastructure Appraisal

G.7.8 The road network within the Study Area comprises major routes including the M62, M18 and M180 which connect the large settlements of Goole, Thorne, Stainforth and Hatfield. Both the M180 and M62/A63 would need to be crossed.

G.7.9 There are also a number of trunk roads within the study area a number of which would need to be crossed where they extend across the study area from east to west.

G.7.10 There are also several railway lines running within the study area including a number that would be unavoidable and would need to be crossed.

G.7.11 The crossing of roads and railways overhead is unlikely to be a major constraint given the required above ground clearance levels of the new OHL.

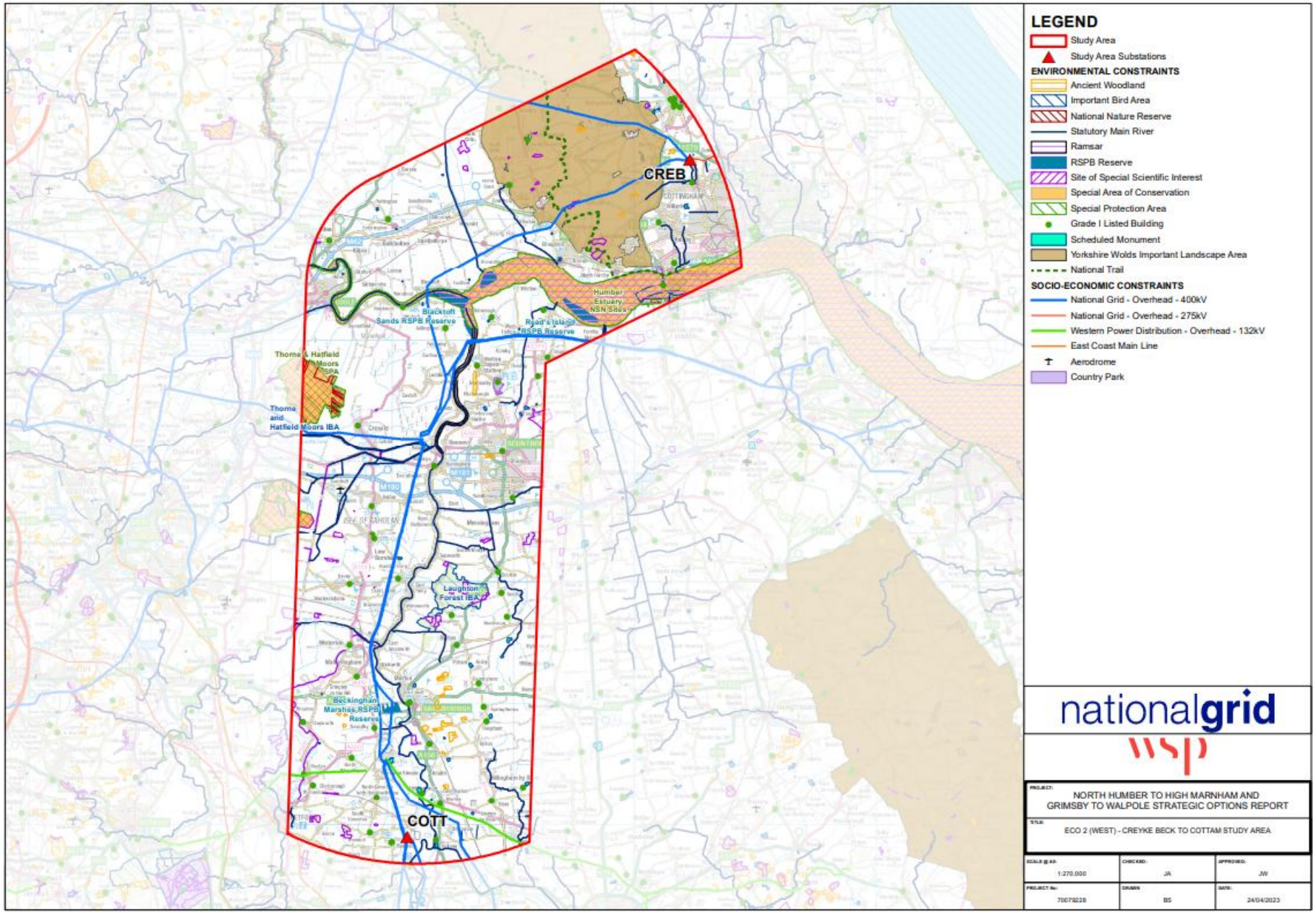
G.7.12 There are numerous airfields within the study area. The airfields are considered to be avoidable.

G.7.13 There is potential for aircraft flightpaths to cross the study area. The study area is partially within the 30km CAA suggested safeguarding zone for Doncaster Sheffield Airport and the 17km safeguarding zone for Retford Gamston Airport. All of the study area is located within a MoD low flying zone, the majority of which is low priority but also including an area of high priority. Part of the southern portion of the study area is within a Met Radar Zone.

G.7.14 Aircraft flightpaths would need to be considered when routeing and siting the pylons. Aviation warning lighting may be required on the pylons. Mitigation may be necessary for the Met Radar Zone.

G.8 ECO-2 (Westward Direction) Summary

G.8.1 Overall, this option is relatively constrained in relation to both ecological, landscape and visual considerations. The OHL would cross the Humber Estuary SPA, Ramsar and SSSI with potential for direct effects on breeding, over-wintering and passage bird species (collision risk) that are a qualifying feature of these designations. Whilst other ecologically designated sites including Thorne and Hatfield Moors SPA and IBA, Thorne Moor SAC, Hatfield Moor SAC, Hatfield Moors SSSI, Thorne, Crowle and Goole Moors SSSI, and Laughton Forest IBA are avoidable there is the potential for adverse effects on the interest features (habitats and species) for which a number of these sites are depending on routeing. Any project would need to demonstrate that it would not affect the integrity of designated sites. Based on the information available at this stage of the project's development, it is considered that a route could be identified at the routing and siting stage that would not affect the integrity of designated sites (once appropriate mitigation was taken into account). The OHL would also cross the Yorkshire Wolds Important Landscape Area. There would however be opportunities through more detailed assessment to prevent and/or reduce the potential for adverse effects. There is potential for adverse effects on the setting of Scheduled Monuments and listed buildings depending on the proximity of the new Sealing End Compound infrastructure required at Cottam. Other key environmental and socio-economic constraints are considered to be less influential with the potential to mitigate adverse impacts through careful consideration of routeing and siting and the use of appropriate technologies.


LEGEND
Study Area
Study Area Substations
ENVIRONMENTAL CONSTRAINTS
Ancient Woodland
Important Bird Area
National Nature Reserve
Statutory Main River
Ramsar
RSPB Reserve
Site of Special Scientific Interest
Special Area of Conservation
Special Protection Area
Grade I Listed Building
Scheduled Monument
Yorkshire Wolds Important Landscape Area
National Trail
SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONSTRAINTS
National Grid - Overhead - 400kV
National Grid - Overhead - 275kV
Western Power Distribution - Overhead - 132kV
East Coast Main Line
Aerodrome
Country Park
CREB
COTT
Humber Estuary SSSI/SPA
Blacktoft Sands RSPB Reserve
Read's Island RSPB Reserve
Thorne & Hatfield Moors SPA
Thorne and Hatfield Moors IBA
Laughton Forest IBA
Beckingham Marshes RSPB Reserve
nationalgrid
wsp
NORTH HUMBER TO HIGH MARNHAM AND GRIMSBY TO WALPOLE STRATEGIC OPTIONS REPORT
ECO 2 (WEST) - CREYKE BECK TO COTTAM STUDY AREA
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24/04/2023

ECO-2 Creyke Beck to Cottam (Eastward Direction)

G.8.2 In order to undertake the environmental and socio-economic appraisal of the ECO-2 (East) option, a study area was established in which the project could reasonably be expected to be developed. For ECO-2 (East), it was identified that a straight-line route direct from Creyke Beck to Cottam would be unrealistic due to the densely built-up urban centre of Kingston Upon Hull; routeing of any new infrastructure would need to avoid this area. The study area encompasses an area approximately 20km wide based on a broad route east from Creyke Beck around Kingston upon Hull and then south-west to Cottam. The appraisal assumes that the substation equipment required at Creyke Beck and Cottam would be delivered by others hence new substation works are excluded from this option; the appraisal does however assume a requirement for a new Sealing End Compound at Cottam. Sites and features that might constrain the development of this option are detailed below.

ECO-2 (Eastward Direction) Environmental Appraisal

Landscape and Visual Appraisal

G.8.3 The nature of the landscape of the study area is predominantly open expansive landscapes under intensive agriculture, with simple landscape patterns. There is little major development outside the main settlements, particularly in the wider area east of Kingston-Upon-Hull and through the centre of the area south of the Humber. The Lincolnshire Wolds AONB encroaches very minimally into the eastern edge of the study area but would be avoided.

G.8.4 The generally low-lying open character with long views increases the risk of wide visibility, however the same open character can allow tall structures to be absorbed. The OHL would need to be routed taking into account the pattern of the landscape to avoid settlements, visitor attractions and long-distance open views (particularly from high ground) as far as possible.

G.8.5 Visibility of the new OHL is likely to be extensive due to the low-lying open character of the landscape. However, it is considered that the existing landscape patterns are unlikely to be disturbed by the introduction of a new OHL.

G.8.6 There is an opportunity to parallel the YYW 275kV OHL to the east of Kingston-Upon-Hull to reduce the impacts of introducing a new OHL route into the landscape. Similarly, there is also an option to consider replacement of the existing YYW 275kV OHL with the new OHL route.

G.8.7 Further south, the density of existing overhead lines may lead to the creation of a wirescape in the Trent valley.

G.8.8 It is likely some residual permanent effects may occur for residents along affected settlement edges and at scattered properties due to the number present within the study area.

Historic Environment Appraisal

G.8.9 There are a number of scheduled monuments scattered throughout the study area including three scheduled monuments (Fleet Plantation moated site, Site of medieval town and Torksey Castle) located within 2km of the existing Cottam substation. It is

anticipated that direct impacts on scheduled monuments can be avoided through careful routeing and siting due to their scattered nature.

G.8.10 A large number of listed buildings have been recorded throughout the study area, with the vast majority being Grade II listed, with fewer Grade I and II* listed buildings. The majority of these are associated with the settlements scattered throughout the study area. These include listed buildings approximately 1.5km to the north, south and west of the existing Cottam substation boundary within and close to the villages of Cottam, Church Laneham and Rampton respectively and approximately 2km to the east of the substation boundary within and close to the village of Torksey.

G.8.11 There are a limited number of registered parks and gardens within the study area. These include Burton Constable north of the Humber, Brocklesby Park south of the Humber, and Fillingham Castle in the southern portion of the study area.

G.8.12 It is likely that listed buildings and registered parks and gardens could be avoided by sensitive routeing and siting.

G.8.13 Whilst designated heritage assets are likely to be avoidable there is the potential for adverse impacts on the setting of such assets depending on the proximity of the OHL and new Sealing End Compound infrastructure required at Cottam.

G.8.14 Physical impacts are likely to be limited to non-designated assets and previously unrecorded assets, although these were not assessed as part of this options appraisal.

G.8.15 Mitigation is expected to be required and could include a phased programme of works including geophysical survey, archaeological evaluation trenching, and archaeological excavation to mitigate physical impacts to non-designated assets / previously unrecorded assets. The design of any above ground infrastructure required, as well as screening/planting, could potentially mitigate impacts on the setting of designated assets where relevant.

Biological Environment Appraisal

G.8.16 The Humber Estuary SAC, SPA, Ramsar site and Site of Special SSSI between Creyke Beck and High Marnham presents a major constraint for the routeing of the new OHL alignment; these designated sites extend from east to west across the study area. It is assumed that this option would require a 6km cable in a tunnel beneath the Humber. Any tunnelling whilst removing the impact of bird strike, could still have negative effects upon the Humber Estuary through disturbance and potential hydrogeological impacts particularly if above-ground infrastructure associated with tunnelling is sited close to the Humber.

G.8.17 There would be a need to follow the Habitats Regulations Assessment process to consider the effects on qualifying species. Any project would need to demonstrate that it would not affect the integrity of the Humber Estuary designated sites. Based on the information available at this stage of the project's development, it is considered that a route could be identified at the routing and siting stage that would not affect the integrity of designated sites (once appropriate mitigation was taken into account).

G.8.18 The opportunity to parallel the YYW 275kV OHL east of Kingston-Upon-Hull should be considered to reduce the impacts of introducing a new OHL route. Similarly, there is also an option to consider replacement of the existing YYW 275kV OHL with the new OHL route.

G.8.19 There are a number of additional SSSIs within the study area including Lea Marsh SSSI, Kingerby Beck Meadows SSSI and Normanby Meadow SSSI. There are also several areas of ancient woodland scattered throughout the study area, particularly to the east of Gainsborough. It is anticipated that direct impacts on these designated sites can be avoided through careful routeing due to their scattered nature.

Physical Environment Appraisal

G.8.20 Any OHL route between Creyke Beck and High Marnham would have to cross over several unavoidable watercourses and associated floodplains including the River Trent near High Marnham and rivers around Cottam.

G.8.21 Areas of GSPZ are present throughout the study area.

G.8.22 Areas of Flood Zones 2 and 3 extend across the study area mainly associated with the Humber, the River Trent and the River Ancholme. Flood Zones 2 and 3 cover areas outside the existing Cottam substation.

G.8.23 Crossings of main rivers, Flood Zone 2 or 3 and GSPZ are expected to be unavoidable. Areas of Flood Zone 2 or 3 are expected to be a constraint for the siting of new Sealing End Compound infrastructure at Cottam. Standard protection measures would need to be applied during the construction phase and consider the areas of GSPZ and flood risk zones within the study area. Foundations would need to be designed accordingly.

ECO 2 (Eastward Direction) Socio-economic Appraisal

Settlements and Populations Appraisal

G.8.24 The large urban area of Kingston-Upon-Hull presents a constraint for routeing of a new OHL south between Creyke Beck and the Humber. There is an opportunity for the new 400kV OHL to parallel the YYW 275kV OHL to the east of Kingston-Upon-Hull to allow avoidance of this urban area. However, urban sprawl and future major allocations should be a consideration to the north and east of Kingston-Upon-Hull given the limited space between the YYW 275kV OHL and the outskirts of the urban area. There is also an option to consider replacement of the existing YYW 275kV OHL with the new OHL route.

G.8.25 The area to the south of the Humber is not as densely populated and urban areas would be less of a constraint for routeing in this area. The area around the Port of Hull and Port of Immingham is congested with existing infrastructure and may be a constraint for routeing and siting.

G.8.26 Temporary adverse impacts associated with noise, air quality and construction traffic could arise if the OHL is situated within proximity to settlements during construction. There is the potential for some adverse visual effects which are set out in the landscape and visual appraisal.

G.8.27 The study area has a large amount of BMV agricultural land considered to be an economic resource. This includes areas of Grade 1 and Grade 2 BMV land south of the Humber. Grade 3 BMV agricultural land is the most prominent land type classification within the southern section of the study area. Temporary effects on agricultural land would occur during the construction phase. A small percentage of agricultural land would be permanently lost due to the footprint of the pylons.

Standard best practice guidelines should be followed to reinstate agricultural land following construction.

Tourism and Recreation Appraisal

G.8.28 There are a number of NCN routes located within the northern portion of the study area in the vicinity of Kingston-Upon-Hull, as well as an NCN which crosses from east to west across the extent of the study area south of the Humber.

G.8.29 There is the potential for temporary adverse effects associated with severance should the NCN routes need to be temporarily closed during construction; however, effects would be temporary.

G.8.30 Standard best practice guidelines should be followed to provide appropriate signage, diversion routes and notice for the users of the NCN routes should part of these routes be closed during construction.

G.8.31 There is one Country Park within the study area: Burton Constable. This site is considered to be avoidable.

Infrastructure Appraisal

G.8.32 The road network within the study area includes the M180, however this could potentially be avoided depending on routeing. There are also a number of trunk roads within the study area, a number of which would need to be crossed where they extend across the study area from east to west.

G.8.33 There are several railway lines running within the study area mainly in and around the Port of Hull and Port of Immingham. A number of these would be unavoidable and would need to be crossed.

G.8.34 The crossing of roads and railways overhead is unlikely to be a major constraint given the required above ground clearance levels of the new 400kV OHL.

G.8.35 The Port of Hull and the Port of Immingham are located in the northern portion section of the study area and would present a constraint to routeing.

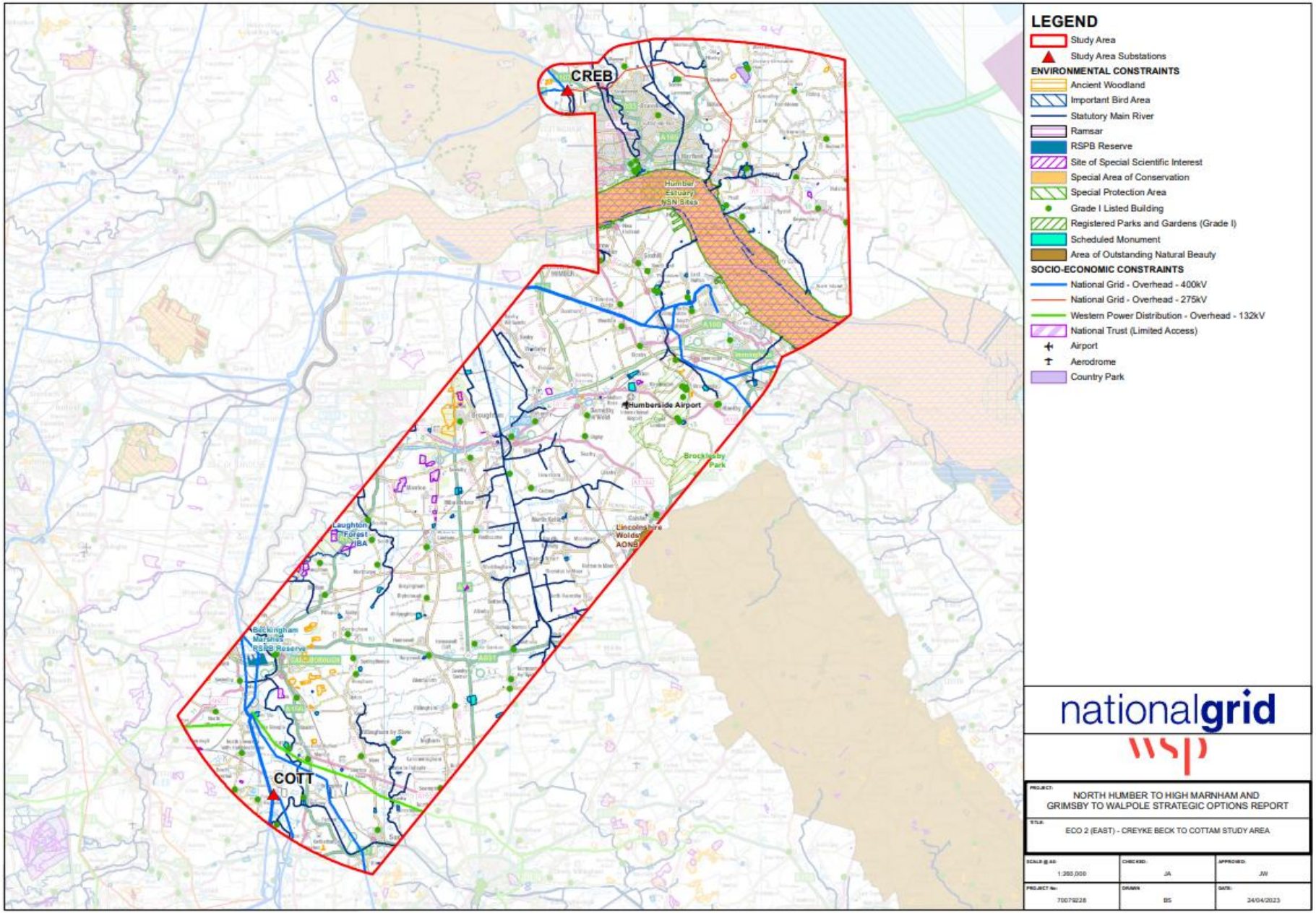
G.8.36 Humberside Airport and Aerodrome and RAF Kirton are located within the study area. There are numerous additional airfields within the study area. The Airport/Aerodrome and airfields would be considered to be avoidable.

G.8.37 There is potential for aircraft flightpaths to cross the study area. The study area is partially within the 17km CAA suggested safeguarding zone for Humberside Airport, the 30km safeguarding zone for Doncaster Sheffield Airport, the 17km safeguarding zone for Retford Gamston Airport and the 5km safeguarding zone. All of the study area is located within a MoD low flying zone, the majority of which is low priority but also including an area of high priority. Part of the southern portion of the study area is within a Met Radar Zone.

G.8.38 Aircraft flightpaths would need to be considered when routeing and siting the pylons. Aviation warning lighting may be required on the pylons. Mitigation may be necessary for the Met Radar Zone.

ECO-2 (Eastward Direction) Summary

G.8.39 Overall, this option is relatively constrained in relation to ecological considerations. Tunnelling beneath the Humber, whilst removing the impact of bird strike, could still have adverse effects upon the Humber Estuary through disturbance and potential hydrogeological impacts. Any project would need to demonstrate that it would not affect the integrity of designated sites. Based on the information available at this stage of the project's development, it is considered that a route could be identified at the routing and siting stage that would not affect the integrity of designated sites (once appropriate mitigation was taken into account). There is potential for adverse effects on the setting of Scheduled Monuments and listed buildings depending on the proximity of the new Sealing End Compound infrastructure required at Cottam. Similarly, there is potential effects for adverse effects on the setting of a number of Registered Parks and Gardens including Brocklesby Park as a result of a new OHL, although it is likely that any such effects could be avoided through careful routeing. Other key environmental and socio-economic constraints are considered to be less influential with the potential to mitigate adverse impacts through careful consideration of routeing and siting and the use of appropriate technologies.


CREB
COTT
Humberside Airport
Humber Estuary
Brocklesby Park
Laughton Forest
Lincolnshire Wolds AONB
Buckingham Marshes RSPB Reserve
LEGEND
Study Area
Study Area Substations
ENVIRONMENTAL CONSTRAINTS
Ancient Woodland
Important Bird Area
Statutory Main River
Ramsar
RSPB Reserve
Site of Special Scientific Interest
Special Area of Conservation
Special Protection Area
Grade I Listed Building
Registered Parks and Gardens (Grade I)
Scheduled Monument
Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONSTRAINTS
National Grid - Overhead - 400kV
National Grid - Overhead - 275kV
Western Power Distribution - Overhead - 132kV
National Trust (Limited Access)
Airport
Aerodrome
Country Park
nationalgrid
wsp
NORTH HUMBER TO HIGH MARNHAM AND GRIMSBY TO WALPOLE STRATEGIC OPTIONS REPORT
ECO 2 (EAST) - CREYKE BECK TO COTTAM STUDY AREA
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ECO-3 Creyke Beck to Grimsby West, Grimsby West to Walpole (Western Direction)

G.8.40 In order to undertake the environmental and socio-economic appraisal of the ECO-3 (West) option, a study area was established in which the project could reasonably be expected to be developed. For ECO-3 (West), it was identified that a straight-line route direct from Creyke Beck to Walpole would be unrealistic due to the densely built-up urban centre of Kingston Upon Hull; routeing of any new infrastructure would need to avoid this area. The study area encompasses an area approximately 20km wide based on a broad route west from Creyke Beck around Kingston upon Hull, then heading south-east to a connection at Grimsby West, and southwards to Walpole. The appraisal assumes that the additional substation equipment required at Creyke Beck would be delivered by others hence new substation works at Creyke Beck are excluded from this option. The appraisal assumes new substation equipment would be required at Grimsby West and Walpole. Sites and features that might constrain the development of this option are detailed below.

ECO-3 (Western Direction) Environmental Appraisal

Landscape and Visual Appraisal

G.8.41 The nature of the landscape of the study area, with the exception of the Yorkshire Wolds in the northern portion of the study area and the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB located along the western extent of the central portion of the study area, is predominantly low-lying flat lands, under intensive agriculture, with smaller areas of gentle relief.

G.8.42 Key sensitive visual receptors within the study area include users of the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB, coastal tourist resorts along the coastline of the study area, and users of the Yorkshire Wolds National Trail which crosses the Wolds within the northern portion of the study area.

G.8.43 Natural England are proposing to designate a new Yorkshire Wolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). A Provisional Candidate Area was released as part of an initial public consultation in June 2022 to obtain feedback on the proposals. Subsequently Natural England held a formal Statutory and Public Consultation on the proposed boundary for the new Yorkshire Wolds AONB between October 2024 and January 2025. The southernmost extent of the proposed AONB boundary is located to the north of Market Weighton and is hence outside the study area. Based on this information, AONB designation of the area of the Yorkshire Wolds within the study area is not anticipated. In the northern portion of the study area, the OHL would need to cross the Yorkshire Wolds escarpment and the settlements along the scarp foot. There is an opportunity to parallel the existing 4ZQ and 2KN 400kV OHLs to minimise the impact associated with construction of a new OHL route in the landscape.

G.8.44 Within the central portion of the study area the overall landform of the study area is flat and open, and generally rises towards the Lincolnshire Wolds. The predominant land use throughout the central and southern portions of the study area is arable farmland with little existing infrastructure outside of the road network, settlements, and a few onshore wind farms. The presence of wind farms off the Lincolnshire coast is recognised.

G.8.45 The Lincolnshire Wolds AONB itself would be avoided by the OHL and therefore direct impacts are unlikely, however views from the AONB are likely to be affected by the introduction of the new OHL infrastructure particularly given the low-lying open topography with views from the Wolds to the coast.

G.8.46 The OHL would need to be routed taking into account the pattern of the landscape to avoid settlements, visitor attractions and long-distance open views (particularly from the AONB and high ground) as far as possible.

G.8.47 In the central portion of the study area there is a potential opportunity to use the landform of the Wolds as a backdrop to reduce visual impact of the OHL, however this would need to be balanced with the need to both avoid the AONB and avoid intruding on views from AONB.

G.8.48 Subject to site selection there may be views of new substation infrastructure at Grimsby West substation from within the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB, however, opportunities exist to develop mitigation. The proximity of the existing Grimsby West substation to the fringes of the existing settlement may increase the potential for visual impacts.

G.8.49 In the southern portion of the study area there is potential for adverse landscape and visual impacts due to the introduction of a new substation at Walpole.

G.8.50 This option is constrained in relation to landscape and visual considerations, with a number of opportunities to avoid constraints and for mitigation through more detailed assessment and siting which would prevent and/or reduce potential for adverse landscape and visual effects.

Historic Environment Appraisal

G.8.51 There are a number of scheduled monuments scattered throughout the study area. It is anticipated that direct impacts on these historic assets can be avoided through careful routeing due to their scattered nature.

G.8.52 A large number of listed buildings have been recorded throughout the study area, with the vast majority being Grade II listed, with fewer Grade I and II* listed buildings. The majority of these are associated with the settlements scattered throughout the study area. These include listed buildings within 1km of the existing Grimsby West substation and Walpole substation. It is likely that listed buildings could be avoided by selecting appropriate route corridors and sensitive routeing and siting.

G.8.53 There are a number of registered parks and gardens within the study area, the largest of which is the Grade I listed Registered Park and Garden of Brocklesby Park. Routeing to the west of Grimsby would need to avoid this registered park and garden.

G.8.54 Whilst designated heritage assets are likely to be avoidable there is the potential for adverse impacts on the setting of such assets depending on the proximity of the OHL and new substation infrastructure.

G.8.55 Physical impacts are likely to be limited to non-designated assets and previously unrecorded assets, although these were not assessed as part of this options appraisal.

G.8.56 Mitigation is expected to be required and could include a phased programme of works including geophysical survey, archaeological evaluation trenching, and archaeological excavation to mitigate physical impacts to non-designated assets /

previously unrecorded assets. The design of any above ground infrastructure required, as well as screening/planting, could potentially mitigate impacts on the setting of designated assets where relevant.

Biological Environment Appraisal

G.8.57 The Humber Estuary SAC, SPA, Ramsar site and SSSI presents a major constraint for the routeing of the new OHL alignment in the northern portion of the study area; these designated sites extend from east to west across the study area. The sites also extend south along the River Trent. There is potential for adverse effects on important habitats and breeding bird populations associated with the Humber Estuary. Paralleling the existing 4ZQ 400kV OHL route to the west of Kingston-Upon-Hull and south over the River Ouse would potentially reduce impacts on protected species, including potential bird strikes.

G.8.58 The Wash Ramsar Site, SSSI, SPA, IBA and National Nature Reserve, The Wash and North Norfolk Coast SAC, the North Norfolk Coast Ramsar Site, IBA and SSSI, and Gibraltar Point Ramsar Site and IBA are located along the eastern boundary in the southern portion of the study area. Whilst these sites are avoidable there is the potential for adverse effects on the interest features both habitats and species for which a number of these sites are designated both during construction and operation.

G.8.59 There are a number of RSPB Reserves within the study area including Read's Island and Blacktoft Sands associated with the Humber Estuary, Tetney Marshes to the south of Cleethorpes and Frampton Marsh to the southeast of Boston.

G.8.60 There would be a need to follow the Habitats Regulations Assessment process to consider the effects of a crossing of the Humber. This would also need to encompass impacts upon The Wash SPA/SAC depending upon distance. Any project would need to demonstrate that it would not affect the integrity of these designated sites. Based on the information available at this stage of the project's development, it is considered that a route could be identified at the routing and siting stage that would not affect the integrity of designated sites (once appropriate mitigation was taken into account). If this is not possible, localised undergrounding could be used to avoid or mitigate unacceptable effects where necessary. Benefits from undergrounding to mitigate bird collision and mortality would need to be considered comparatively with potential adverse impacts that may arise from land and habitat disturbance due to undergrounding within, and in close proximity to, designated sites.

G.8.61 There are a number of additional SSSIs within the study area although these are smaller scattered sites which could be avoided by through careful routeing. Areas of ancient woodland within the study area are located in the northern and central portions of the study area. It is anticipated that direct impacts on these designated sites can be avoided through careful routeing due to their scattered nature.

Physical Environment Appraisal

G.8.62 Any OHL route between Creyke Beck and Walpole would have to cross over several unavoidable watercourses and associated floodplains including the River Ouse, the River Ancholme, the River Witham, the River Welland and the River Nene. There is an opportunity to parallel the existing 4ZQ 400kV OHL which crosses the River Ouse.

G.8.63 Areas of GSPZ are present within the northern and central portions of the study.

G.8.64 Flood Zones 2 and 3 cover large extents of the study area, in particular south of Skegness where Flood Zones 2 and 3 cover almost the entire extent of the study area. Given the extent of Flood Zones 2 and 3 across the study area, it is likely that a significant amount of development would be located within the floodplain.

G.8.65 Crossings of main rivers, Flood Zone 2 or 3 and GSPZ are expected to be unavoidable. Areas of Flood Zone 2 or 3 are expected to be a constraint for the siting of new substation infrastructure at Walpole. Standard protection measures would need to be applied during the construction phase and consider the areas of GSPZ and flood risk zones within the study area. Foundations would need to be designed accordingly.

ECO 3 (Westward Direction) Socio-economic Appraisal

Settlements and Populations Appraisal

G.8.66 There are a number of large urban areas within the study area including Scunthorpe, Immingham, Grimsby and Boston as well as numerous smaller towns and settlements scattered throughout. These areas would limit routeing opportunities at several points, particularly to the west and south of Grimsby where the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB is also a constraint. There is an opportunity for the new OHL to parallel the existing 4ZQ and 2KN/4KG 400kV OHLs especially to the northwest of Grimsby West.

G.8.67 Temporary adverse impacts associated with noise, air quality and construction traffic could arise if the OHL is situated within proximity to settlements during construction. There is the potential for some adverse visual effects which are set out in the landscape and visual appraisal.

G.8.68 The study area has a large amount of BMV agricultural land considered to be an economic resource. This includes areas of Grade 1 and Grade 2 BMV land particularly south of the Humber, southeast of Grimsby and in the southern portion of the study area south of Skegness. Agricultural land would be permanently lost due to the footprint of the pylons and substations at Grimsby West and Walpole.

Tourism and Recreation Appraisal

G.8.69 The Yorkshire Wolds National Trail crosses the northern portion of the study area crossing the Wolds. There are a number of National Cycle Networks (NCN) routes which extend across the study area including the Trans Pennine Trail north of the Humber, NCN1 which runs from Lincoln to Kingston-upon-Hull, the NCN110 south of Grimsby, the Water Way Trail to Boston and NCN1 from Boston towards Wisbech.

G.8.70 There is the potential for temporary adverse effects associated with severance should the National Trail and NCN routes need to be temporarily closed during construction; however, effects would be temporary. There is the potential for some adverse visual effects on users of the National Trail which are set out in the landscape and visual appraisal, and these effects would be permanent.

G.8.71 Standard best practice guidelines should be followed to provide appropriate signage, diversion routes and notice for the users of the NCN routes and National Trail should part of these routes or trails be closed during construction.

G.8.72 There are seven Country Parks within the study area. These include Waters Edge and Humber Bridge Country Parks located either side of the Humber Estuary,

Normanby Hall Country Park located north of Scunthorpe, and Cleethorpes and Weelsby Woods Country Parks near Cleethorpes. These sites are considered to be avoidable. The Witham Way and Havenside Country Parks located to the west and east of Boston respectively are linear in nature and would need to be considered during routeing.

G.8.73 There is one National Trust holding present within the study area located at Gunby Park, near Spilsby which is considered to be avoidable.

G.8.74 The Lincolnshire coast and north Norfolk coast are popular tourist destinations with a number of coastal resorts and extensive areas of holiday accommodation. It is considered that effects upon the local tourist economy could be minimised through careful routing and design.

Infrastructure Appraisal

G.8.75 The road network within the northern portion of the study area comprises major routes including the M62, M181 and M180. Both the M180/A180 and M62/A63 would need to be crossed.

G.8.76 There are also a number of trunk roads and A roads within the study area including the A16 and A17 which run north-south through the central and southern portions of the study area. A number of these roads would need to be crossed particularly where they extend across the study area from east to west.

G.8.77 There are several railway lines running within the study area particularly in the area around Scunthorpe, Immingham and Grimsby. Further south there is a railway line running south from Skegness to Boston onwards to Sleaford. A number of these railway lines would be unavoidable and would need to be crossed.

G.8.78 The crossing of roads and railways overhead is unlikely to be a major constraint given the required above ground clearance levels of the new 400kV OHL.

G.8.79 Humberside Airport and Aerodrome and Fenland Aerodrome are located within the study area. RAF Wainfleet and RAF Holbeach are located on the eastern boundary of the southern portion of the study area. There are also numerous additional airfields within the study area. The Airport, Aerodrome, RAF bases and airfields would be considered to be avoidable.

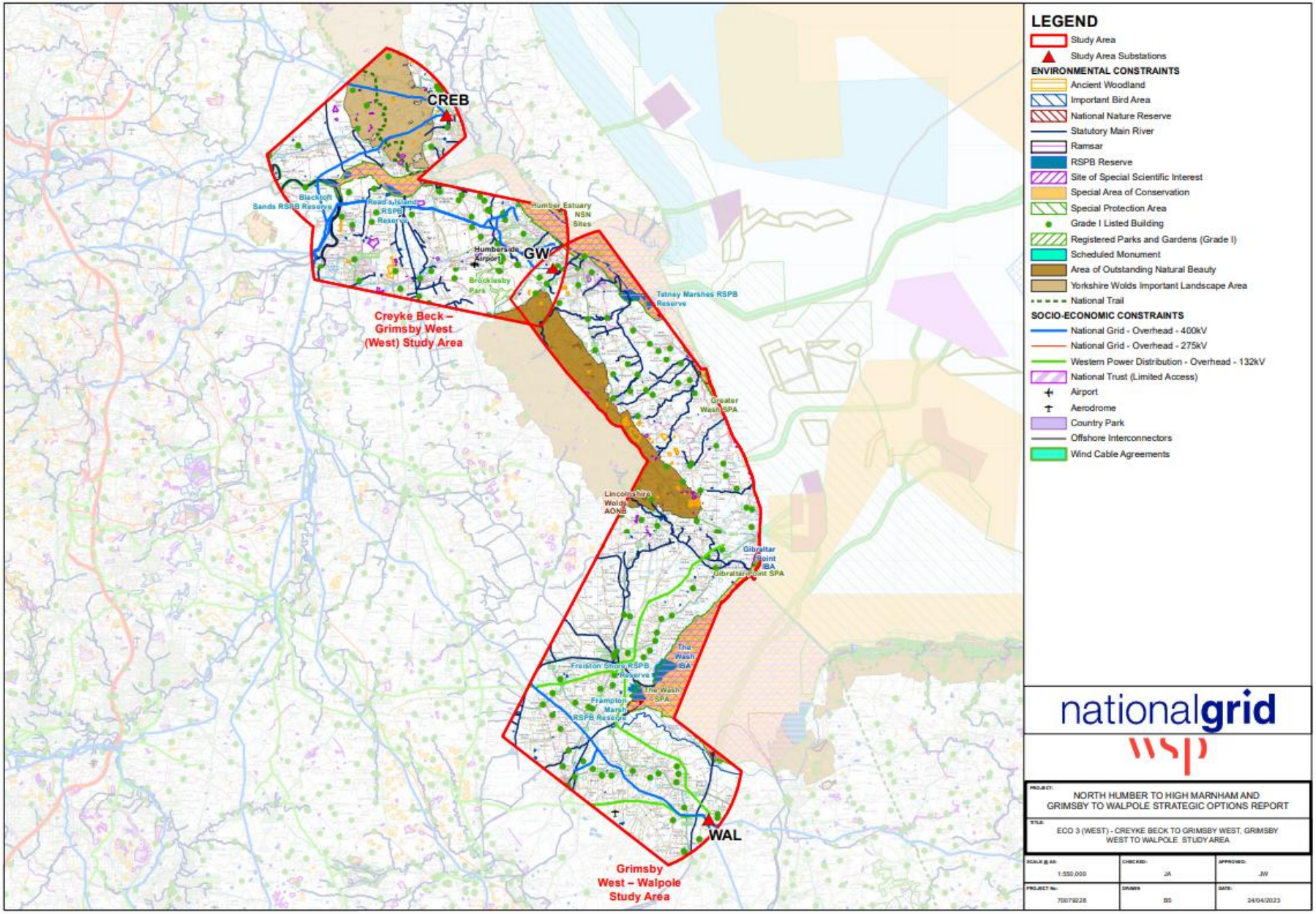
G.8.80 There is potential for aircraft flightpaths to cross the study area. The study area is partially within the CAA suggested safeguarding zone for Humberside Airport in the northern portion of the study area and partially within the safeguarding zone for Fenland Aerodrome in the south. All of the study area is located within a Ministry of Defence (MoD) low flying zone, the majority of which is low priority but also including an area of high priority at the northern end.

G.8.81 Aircraft flightpaths would need to be considered when routeing and siting the pylons. Aviation warning lighting may be required on the pylons.

ECO-3 (Westward Direction) Summary

G.8.82 Overall, this option is relatively constrained in relation to both ecological, landscape and visual considerations. The OHL would cross the Humber Estuary SPA, Ramsar and SSSI with potential for direct effects on breeding, over-wintering and passage bird species (collision risk) that are a qualifying feature of these designations. Whilst The Wash Ramsar Site, SSSI, SPA, IBA and National Nature Reserve, The Wash

and North Norfolk Coast IBA and SAC, and Gibraltar Point Ramsar Site and IBA are avoidable there is the potential for adverse effects on the interest features both habitats and species for which a number of these sites are designated. Any project would need to demonstrate that it would not affect the integrity of designated sites. Based on the information available at this stage of the project's development, it is considered that a route could be identified at the routing and siting stage that would not affect the integrity of designated sites (once appropriate mitigation was taken into account). The OHL would cross the Yorkshire Wolds Important Landscape Area, and although the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB would be avoided by the OHL, there is potential for long-term effects on views from the AONB from the OHL. There is potential for adverse effects on the setting of Brocklesby Park Registered Park and Garden as a result of the new OHL depending on routeing. There would however be opportunities through more detailed assessment to prevent and/or reduce the potential for adverse effects. Other key environmental and socio-economic constraints are considered to be less influential with the potential to mitigate adverse impacts through careful consideration of routeing and siting and the use of appropriate technologies.


CREB
GW
WAL
Creyke Beck – Grimsby West (West) Study Area
Grimsby West – Walpole Study Area
Blacktoft Sands RSPB Reserve
Read's Island RSPB Reserve
Humber Estuary NSN Sites
Humberside Airport
Brocklesby Park
Tetney Marshes RSPB Reserve
Greater Wash SPA
Lincolnshire Wolds AONB
Gibraltar Point IBA
Gibraltar Point SPA
Freiston Shore RSPB Reserve
The Wash IBA
The Wash SPA
Frampton Marsh RSPB Reserve
LEGEND
Study Area
Study Area Substations
ENVIRONMENTAL CONSTRAINTS
Ancient Woodland
Important Bird Area
National Nature Reserve
Statutory Main River
Ramsar
RSPB Reserve
Site of Special Scientific Interest
Special Area of Conservation
Special Protection Area
Grade I Listed Building
Registered Parks and Gardens (Grade I)
Scheduled Monument
Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
Yorkshire Wolds Important Landscape Area
National Trail
SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONSTRAINTS
National Grid - Overhead - 400kV
National Grid - Overhead - 275kV
Western Power Distribution - Overhead - 132kV
National Trust (Limited Access)
Airport
Aerodrome
Country Park
Offshore Interconnectors
Wind Cable Agreements
nationalgrid
wsp
NORTH HUMBER TO HIGH MARNHAM AND GRIMSBY TO WALPOLE STRATEGIC OPTIONS REPORT
ECO 3 (WEST) - CREYKE BECK TO GRIMSBY WEST, GRIMSBY WEST TO WALPOLE STUDY AREA
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ECO-3 Creyke Beck to Grimsby West, Grimsby West to Walpole (Eastward Direction)

G.8.83 In order to undertake the environmental and socio-economic appraisal of the ECO-3 (East) option, a study area was established in which the project could reasonably be expected to be developed. For ECO-3 (East), it was identified that a straight-line route direct from Creyke Beck to Walpole would be unrealistic due to the densely built-up urban centre of Kingston Upon Hull; routeing of any new infrastructure would need to avoid this area. The study area encompasses an area approximately 20km wide based on a broad route east from Creyke Beck around Kingston upon Hull, then heading south-east to a connection at Grimsby West, and southwards to Walpole. The appraisal assumes that the substation equipment required at Creyke Beck would be delivered by others hence new substation works at Creyke Beck are excluded from this option. The appraisal assumes new substation equipment would be required at Grimsby West and Walpole. Sites and features that might constrain the development of an OHL for the option are detailed below.

ECO-3 (Eastward Direction) Environmental Appraisal

Landscape and Visual Appraisal

G.8.84 The nature of the landscape of the study area, with the exception of the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB located along the western extent of the central portion of the study area, is predominantly open expansive landscapes under intensive agriculture, with simple landscape patterns. There is little major development outside the main settlements.

G.8.85 Key sensitive visual receptors within the study area include users of the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB and coastal tourist resorts.

G.8.86 In the northern portion of the study area, there is little major development outside the main settlements, particularly in the wider area east of Kingston-Upon-Hull. Within the central portion of the study area the overall landform of the study area is flat and open, and generally rises towards the Lincolnshire Wolds. The predominant land use throughout the central and southern portions of the study area is arable farmland with little existing infrastructure outside of the road network, settlements, and a few onshore wind farms. The presence of wind farms off the Lincolnshire coast is recognised.

G.8.87 The Lincolnshire Wolds AONB itself would be avoided by the OHL and therefore direct impacts are unlikely, however views from the AONB are likely to be affected by the introduction of the new OHL infrastructure particularly given the low-lying open topography with views from the Wolds to the coast.

G.8.88 The OHL would need to be routed taking into account the pattern of the landscape to avoid settlements, visitor attractions and long-distance open views (particularly from the AONB and high ground) as far as possible.

G.8.89 There is an opportunity to parallel the YYW 275kV OHL east of Kingston-Upon-Hull and 2AD 400kV OHL south of the Humber to prevent the introduction of a completely new OHL route and concentrate landscape and visual effects in one location. There is also an option to consider replacement of the existing YYW 275kV OHL with the new OHL route.

G.8.90 In the central portion of the study area there is a potential opportunity to use the landform of the Wolds as a backdrop to reduce visual impact of the OHL, however this would need to be balanced with the need to both avoid the AONB and avoid intruding on views from AONB.

G.8.91 Subject to site selection there may be views of new substation infrastructure at Grimsby West substation from within the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB, however, opportunities exist to develop mitigation. The proximity of the existing Grimsby West substation to the fringes of the existing settlement may increase the potential for visual impacts.

G.8.92 In the southern portion of the study area there is potential for adverse landscape and visual impacts due to the introduction of a new substation at Walpole.

G.8.93 This option is constrained in relation to landscape and visual considerations, with a number of opportunities to avoid constraints and for mitigation through more detailed assessment and siting which would prevent and/or reduce potential for adverse landscape and visual effects.

Historic Environment Appraisal

G.8.94 There are a number of scheduled monuments scattered throughout the study area. It is anticipated that direct impacts on these historic assets can be avoided through careful routeing due to their scattered nature.

G.8.95 A large number of listed buildings have been recorded throughout the study area, with the vast majority being Grade II listed, with fewer Grade I and II* listed buildings. The majority of these are associated with the settlements scattered throughout the study area. These include listed buildings within 1km of the existing Grimsby West substation and Walpole substation. It is likely that listed buildings could be avoided by selecting appropriate route corridors and sensitive routeing and siting.

G.8.96 There are a number of registered parks and gardens within the study area including Well Hall and Gunby Park which would be considered to be avoidable.

G.8.97 Whilst designated heritage assets are likely to be avoidable there is the potential for adverse impacts on the setting of such assets depending on the proximity of the OHL and substation infrastructure.

G.8.98 Physical impacts are likely to be limited to non-designated assets and previously unrecorded assets, although these were not assessed as part of this options appraisal.

G.8.99 Mitigation is expected to be required and could include a phased programme of works including geophysical survey, archaeological evaluation trenching, and archaeological excavation to mitigate physical impacts to non-designated assets / previously unrecorded assets. The design of any above ground infrastructure required, as well as screening/planting, could potentially mitigate impacts on the setting of designated assets where relevant.

Biological Environment Appraisal

G.8.100 The Humber Estuary SAC, SPA, Ramsar site and SSSI presents a major constraint for the routeing of the new OHL alignment in the northern portion of the study area; these designated sites extend from east to west across the study area. It is assumed that this option would require a 6km cable in a tunnel beneath the Humber. Any

tunnelling whilst removing the impact of bird strike, could still have negative effects upon the Humber Estuary through disturbance and potential hydrogeological impacts particularly if above-ground infrastructure associated with tunnelling is sited close to the Humber.

G.8.101 The Wash Ramsar Site, SSSI, SPA, IBA and National Nature Reserve, The Wash and North Norfolk Coast SAC, the North Norfolk Coast Ramsar Site, IBA and SSSI, and Gibraltar Point Ramsar Site and IBA are located along the eastern boundary in the southern portion of the study area. Whilst these sites are avoidable there is the potential for adverse effects on the interest features both habitats and species for which a number of the sites are designated both during construction and operation.

G.8.102 There are a number of RSPB Reserves within the study area including Read's Island and Blacktoft Sands associated with the Humber Estuary, Tetney Marshes to the south of Cleethorpes and Frampton Marsh to the southeast of Boston.

G.8.103 There would be a need to follow the Habitats Regulations Assessment process to consider the effects of a crossing of the Humber. This would also need to encompass impacts upon The Wash SPA/SAC depending upon distance. Any project would need to demonstrate that it would not affect the integrity of these designated sites. Based on the information available at this stage of the project's development, it is considered that a route could be identified at the routing and siting stage that would not affect the integrity of designated sites (once appropriate mitigation was taken into account).

G.8.104 There is an opportunity to parallel the YYW 275kV OHL east of Kingston-Upon-Hull and 2AD 400kV OHL south of the Humber to prevent the introduction of a completely new OHL route and concentrate ecological effects in one location. There is also an option to consider replacement of the existing YYW 275kV OHL with the new OHL route.

G.8.105 There are a number of additional SSSIs within the study area although these are smaller scattered sites which could be avoided by through careful routeing. Areas of ancient woodland within the study area are located in the northern and central portions of the study area. It is anticipated that direct impacts on these designated sites can be avoided through careful routeing due to their scattered nature.

Physical Environment Appraisal

G.8.106 Any OHL route between Creyke Beck and Walpole would have to cross over several unavoidable watercourses and associated floodplains including the Steeping River, the River Witham, the River Welland and the River Nene.

G.8.107 Areas of GSPZ are present throughout the study area.

G.8.108 Flood Zones 2 and 3 cover large extents of the study area, in particular south of Skegness where Flood Zones 2 and 3 cover almost the entire extent of the study area.

G.8.109 Crossings of main rivers, Flood Zone 2 or 3 and GSPZ are expected to be unavoidable. Areas of Flood Zone 2 or 3 are expected to be a constraint for the siting of new substation infrastructure at Walpole. Standard protection measures would need to be applied during the construction phase and consider the areas of GSPZ and flood risk zones within the study area. Foundations would need to be designed accordingly.

ECO 3 (Eastward Direction) Socio-economic Appraisal

Settlements and Populations Appraisal

G.8.110 The large urban area of Kingston-Upon-Hull presents a constraint for routeing of a new OHL north of the Humber. Similarly, the urban areas of Grimsby and Boston present a constraint for routeing of a new OHL in the central and southern portion of the study area. There are also numerous smaller towns and settlements scattered throughout the study area and therefore limit routeing opportunities at several points, particularly to the west and south of Grimsby where the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB is also a constraint.

G.8.111 There is an opportunity for the new OHL to parallel the YYW 275kV OHL to the east of Kingston-Upon-Hull to allow avoidance of this urban area. However, urban sprawl and future major allocations should be a consideration to the north and east of Kingston-Upon-Hull given the limited space between the YYW 275kV OHL and the outskirts of the urban area. There is also an option to consider replacement of the existing YYW 275kV OHL with the new OHL route.

G.8.112 Temporary adverse impacts associated with noise, air quality and construction traffic could arise if the OHL is situated within proximity to settlements during construction. There is the potential for some adverse visual effects which are set out in the landscape and visual appraisal.

G.8.113 The study area has a large amount of BMV agricultural land considered to be an economic resource. This includes areas of Grade 1 and Grade 2 BMV land particularly southeast of Grimsby and in the southern portion of the study area south of Skegness. Agricultural land would be permanently lost due to the footprint of the pylons and substations at Grimsby West and Walpole.

Tourism and Recreation Appraisal

G.8.114 There are a number of National Cycle Networks (NCN) routes which extend across the study area including the Trans Pennine Trail north of the Humber, the NCN110 south of Grimsby, the Water Way Trail to Boston, the NCN1 running south from Boston and NCN1 from Boston towards Wisbech.

G.8.115 There is the potential for temporary adverse effects associated with severance should the NCN routes need to be temporarily closed during construction; however, effects would be temporary.

G.8.116 Standard best practice guidelines should be followed to provide appropriate signage, diversion routes and notice for the users of the NCN routes should part of these routes or trails be closed during construction.

G.8.117 There are five Country Parks within the study area. These include Burton Constable Country Park east of Kingston-Upon-Hull and Cleethorpes and Weelsby Woods Country Parks near Cleethorpes. These sites are considered to be avoidable. The Witham Way and Havenside Country Parks located to the west and east of Boston respectively are linear in nature and would need to be considered during routeing.

G.8.118 There is one National Trust holding present within the study area located at Gunby Park, near Spilsby which is considered to be avoidable.

G.8.119 The Lincolnshire coast and north Norfolk coast are popular tourist destinations with a number of coastal resorts and extensive areas of holiday accommodation. It is

considered that effects upon the local tourist economy could be minimised through careful routing and design.

Infrastructure Appraisal

G.8.120 The road network within the study area includes a number of A roads including the A165 to Kingston-Upon-Hull, the A180 to Grimsby, the A158 and A52 to Skegness, the A52 and A1121 to Boston, and the A16 and A17 which run north-south through the central and southern portions of the study area. A number of these roads would need to be crossed particularly where they extend across the study area from east to west.

G.8.121 There are several railway lines running within the study area particularly in and around the Port of Hull, Port of Immingham and Port of Grimsby. Further south there is a railway line running south from Skegness to Boston onwards to Sleaford, and from Sleaford to Spalding. A number of these would be unavoidable and would need to be crossed.

G.8.122 The crossing of roads and railways overhead is unlikely to be a major constraint given the required above ground clearance levels of the new 400kV OHL.

G.8.123 The Port of Hull, the Port of Immingham and the Port of Grimsby are located in the northern portion section of the study area and would present a constraint to routeing.

G.8.124 Humberside Airport and Aerodrome and Fenland Aerodrome are located within the study area. RAF Wainfleet and RAF Holbeach are located on the eastern boundary of the southern portion of the study area. There are also numerous additional airfields within the study area. The Airport, Aerodrome, RAF bases and airfields would be considered to be avoidable.

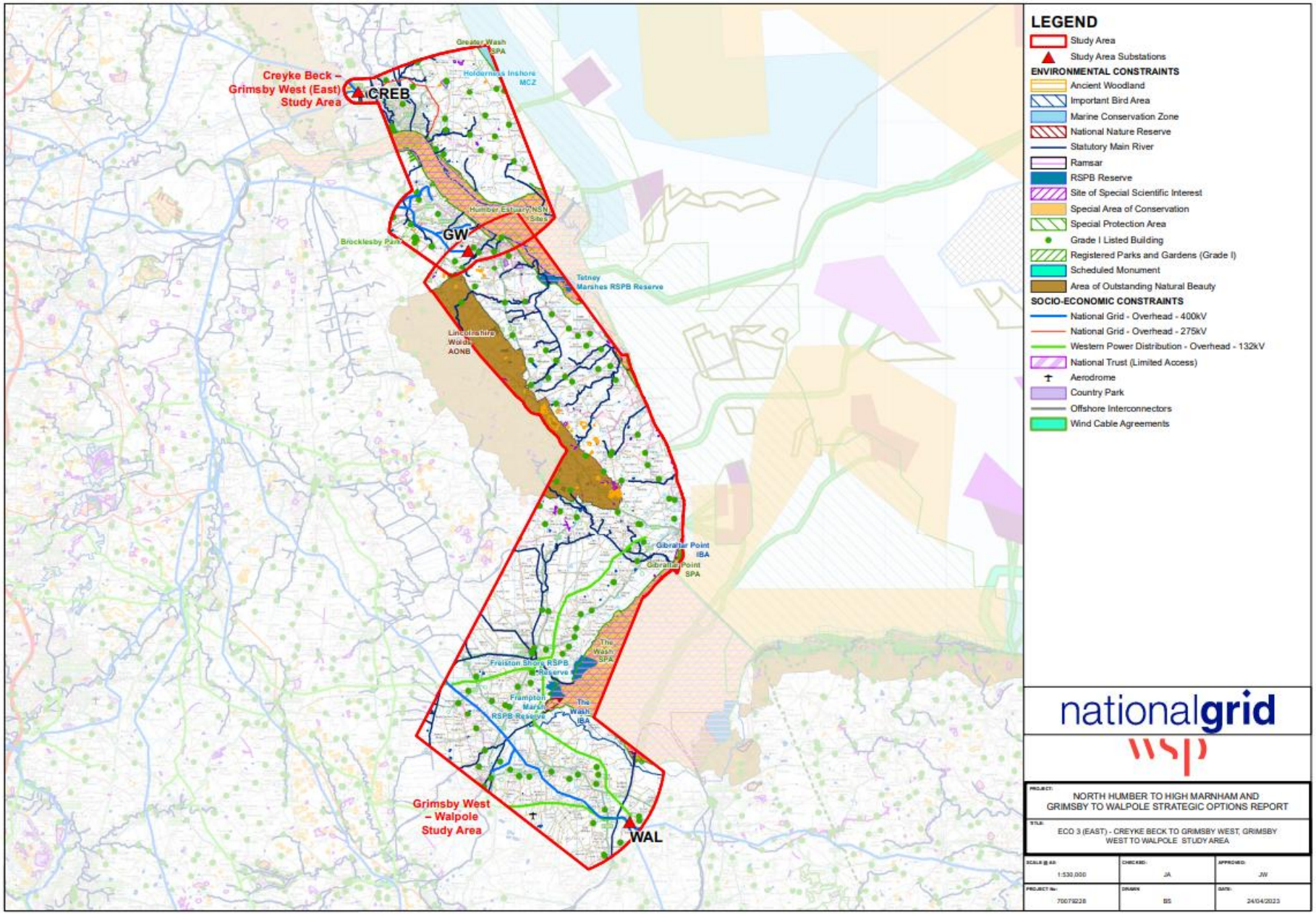
G.8.125 There is potential for aircraft flightpaths to cross the study area. The study area is partially within the CAA suggested safeguarding zone for Humberside Airport in the northern portion of the study area and partially within the safeguarding zone for Fenland Aerodrome in the south. All of the study area is located within a Ministry of Defence (MoD) low flying zone, the majority of which is low priority but also including an area of high priority at the northern end.

G.8.126 Aircraft flightpaths would need to be considered when routeing and siting the pylons. Aviation warning lighting may be required on the pylons. Mitigation may be necessary for the Met Radar Zone.

ECO-3 (Eastward Direction) Summary

G.8.127 Overall, this option is relatively constrained in relation to both ecological, landscape and visual considerations. Tunnelling beneath the Humber, whilst removing the impact of bird strike, could still have adverse effects upon the Humber Estuary through disturbance and potential hydrogeological impacts. Whilst The Wash Ramsar Site, SSSI, SPA, IBA and National Nature Reserve, The Wash and North Norfolk Coast IBA and SAC, and Gibraltar Point Ramsar Site and IBA are avoidable there is the potential for adverse effects on the interest features both habitats and species for which a number of these sites are designated. Any project would need to demonstrate that it would not affect the integrity of designated sites. Based on the information available at this stage of the project's development, it is considered that a route could be identified at the routing and siting stage that would not affect the integrity of designated sites (once appropriate mitigation was taken into account).

Although the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB would be avoided by the OHL, there is potential for long-term effects on views from the AONB. There would however be opportunities through more detailed assessment to prevent and/or reduce the potential for adverse effects. Other key environmental and socio-economic constraints are considered to be less influential with the potential to mitigate adverse impacts through careful consideration of routeing and siting and the use of appropriate technologies.


Creyke Beck – Grimsby West (East) Study Area
CREB
GW
Grimsby West – Walpole Study Area
WAL
Greater Wash SPA
Holderness Inshore MCZ
Humber Estuary NNR Sites
Brocklesby Park
Tetney Marshes RSPB Reserve
Lincolnshire Wolds AONB
Gibraltar Point IBA
Gibraltar Point SPA
The Wash SPA
Freiston Shore RSPB Reserve
Frampton Marsh RSPB Reserve
The Wash IBA
LEGEND
Study Area
Study Area Substations
ENVIRONMENTAL CONSTRAINTS
Ancient Woodland
Important Bird Area
Marine Conservation Zone
National Nature Reserve
Statutory Main River
Ramsar
RSPB Reserve
Site of Special Scientific Interest
Special Area of Conservation
Special Protection Area
Grade I Listed Building
Registered Parks and Gardens (Grade I)
Scheduled Monument
Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONSTRAINTS
National Grid - Overhead - 400kV
National Grid - Overhead - 275kV
Western Power Distribution - Overhead - 132kV
National Trust (Limited Access)
Aerodrome
Country Park
Offshore Interconnectors
Wind Cable Agreements
nationalgrid
wsp
NORTH HUMBER TO HIGH MARNHAM AND GRIMSBY TO WALPOLE STRATEGIC OPTIONS REPORT
ECO 3 (EAST) - CREYKE BECK TO GRIMSBY WEST, GRIMSBY WEST TO WALPOLE STUDY AREA
1:530,000
JA
JW
70079228
BS
24/04/2023

ECO-4 Creyke Beck to Grimsby West, Grimsby West to Weston Marsh substation(s) (Westward Direction)

G.8.128 In order to undertake the environmental and socio-economic appraisal of the ECO-4 (West) option, a study area was established in which the project could reasonably be expected to be developed. For ECO-4 (West), it was identified that a straight-line route direct from Creyke Beck to Weston Marsh would be unrealistic due to the densely built-up urban centre of Kingston Upon Hull; routeing of any new infrastructure would need to avoid this area. The study area encompasses an area approximately 20km wide based on a broad route west from Creyke Beck around Kingston upon Hull, then heading south-east to a connection at Grimsby West and southwards to Weston Marsh. The appraisal assumes that the substation equipment required at Creyke Beck would be delivered by others hence new substation works at Creyke Beck are excluded from this option. The appraisal assumes new substation equipment would be required at Grimsby West and Weston Marsh substation(s). Sites and features that might constrain the development of this option are detailed below.

ECO-4 (Westward Direction) Environmental Appraisal

Landscape and Visual Appraisal

G.8.129 The nature of the landscape of the study area, with the exception of the Yorkshire Wolds in the northern portion of the study area and the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB located along the western extent of the central portion of the study area, is predominantly low-lying flat lands, under intensive agriculture, with smaller areas of gentle relief.

G.8.130 Key sensitive visual receptors within the study area include users of the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB, coastal tourist resorts along the coastline of the study area, and users of the Yorkshire Wolds National Trail which crosses the Wolds within the northern portion of the study area.

G.8.131 Natural England are proposing to designate consulted on the Yorkshire Wolds Designation Project to consider the possible designation of a new Yorkshire Wolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). A Provisional Candidate Area was released as part of an initial public consultation evaluation stage in June 2022 to obtain feedback on the proposals. Subsequently Natural England held a formal Statutory and Public Consultation on the proposed boundary for the new Yorkshire Wolds AONB between October 2024 and January 2025. The southernmost extent of the proposed AONB boundary Provisional Candidate Area is located to the north of Market Weighton and is hence outside the Creyke Beck to High Marnham study area. Based on existing this information, AONB designation of the area of Yorkshire Wolds within the study area is not anticipated. In the northern portion of the study area, to the OHL would need to cross the Yorkshire Wolds escarpment and the settlements along the scarp foot. There is an opportunity to parallel the existing 4ZQ and 2KN 400kV OHLs to minimise the impact associated with construction of a new OHL route in the landscape.

G.8.132 Within the central portion of the study area the overall landform of the study area is flat and open, and generally rises towards the Lincolnshire Wolds. The predominant land use throughout the central and southern portions of the study area is arable

farmland with little existing infrastructure outside of the road network, settlements, and a few onshore wind farms. The presence of wind farms off the Lincolnshire coast is recognised.

G.8.133 The Lincolnshire Wolds AONB itself would be avoided by the OHL and therefore direct impacts are unlikely, however views from the AONB are likely to be affected by the introduction of the new OHL infrastructure particularly given the low-lying open topography with views from the Wolds to the coast.

G.8.134 The OHL would need to be routed taking into account the pattern of the landscape to avoid settlements, visitor attractions and long-distance open views (particularly from the AONB and high ground) as far as possible.

G.8.135 In the central portion of the study area there is a potential opportunity to use the landform of the Wolds as a backdrop to reduce visual impact of the OHL, however this would need to be balanced with the need to both avoid the AONB and avoid intruding on views from AONB.

G.8.136 Subject to site selection there may be views of new substation infrastructure at Grimsby West substation from within the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB, however, this is not considered to be significant, and opportunities exist to develop mitigation. The proximity of the existing Grimsby West substation to the fringes of the existing settlement may increase the potential for visual impacts.

G.8.137 In the southern portion of the study area there is potential for adverse landscape and visual impacts due to the introduction of a new substation(s) at Weston Marsh[35] into a landscape which currently has very little major infrastructure outside the larger settlements.

G.8.138 This option is constrained in relation to landscape and visual considerations, with a number of opportunities to avoid constraints and for mitigation through more detailed assessment and siting which would prevent and/or reduce potential for adverse landscape and visual effects.

Historic Environment Appraisal

G.8.139 There are a number of scheduled monuments scattered throughout the study area. It is anticipated that direct impacts on these historic assets can be avoided through careful routeing due to their scattered nature.

G.8.140 A large number of listed buildings have been recorded throughout the study area, with the vast majority being Grade II listed, with fewer Grade I and II* listed buildings. These include listed buildings within 1km of the existing Grimsby West substation. The majority of these are associated with the settlements scattered throughout the study area. It is likely that listed buildings could be avoided by selecting appropriate route corridors and sensitive routeing.

G.8.141 There are a number of registered parks and gardens within the study area, the largest of which is the Grade I listed Registered Park and Garden of Brocklesby Park. Routeing to the west of Grimsby would need to avoid this registered park and garden.

[35] assumed to be at a location close to the existing 4ZM route, however exact location subject to routing / siting

G.8.142 Whilst designated heritage assets are likely to be avoidable there is the potential for adverse impacts on the setting of such assets depending on the proximity of the OHL and substation infrastructure.

G.8.143 Physical impacts are likely to be limited to non-designated assets and previously unrecorded assets, although these were not assessed as part of this options appraisal.

G.8.144 Mitigation is expected to be required and could include a phased programme of works including geophysical survey, archaeological evaluation trenching, and archaeological excavation to mitigate physical impacts to non-designated assets / previously unrecorded assets. The design of any above ground infrastructure required, as well as screening/planting, could potentially mitigate impacts on the setting of designated assets where relevant.

Biological Environment Appraisal

G.8.145 The Humber Estuary SAC, SPA, Ramsar site and SSSI presents a major constraint for the routeing of the new OHL alignment in the northern portion of the study area; these designated sites extend from east to west across the study area. The sites also extend south along the River Trent. There is potential for adverse effects on important habitats and breeding bird populations associated with the Humber Estuary. Paralleling the existing 4ZQ 400kV OHL route to the west of Kingston-Upon-Hull and south over the River Ouse would potentially reduce impacts on protected species, including potential bird strikes.

G.8.146 The Wash Ramsar Site, SSSI, SPA, IBA and National Nature Reserve, The Wash and North Norfolk Coast SAC, the North Norfolk Coast Ramsar Site, SSSI and IBA, and Gibraltar Point Ramsar Site and IBA are located along the eastern boundary in the southern portion of the study area. Whilst these sites are avoidable there is the potential for adverse effects on the interest features both habitats and species for which a number of these sites are designated both during construction and operation.

G.8.147 There are a number of RSPB Reserves within the study area including Read's Island and Blacktoft Sands associated with the Humber Estuary, Tetney Marshes to the south of Cleethorpes and Frampton Marsh to the southeast of Boston.

G.8.148 There would be a need to follow the Habitats Regulations Assessment process to consider the effects of a crossing of the Humber. This would also need to encompass impacts upon The Wash SPA/SAC depending upon distance. Any project would need to demonstrate that it would not affect the integrity of these designated sites. Based on the information available at this stage of the project's development, it is considered that a route could be identified at the routing and siting stage that would not affect the integrity of designated sites (once appropriate mitigation was taken into account). If this is not possible, localised undergrounding could be used to avoid or mitigate unacceptable effects where necessary. Benefits from undergrounding to mitigate bird collision and mortality would need to be considered comparatively with potential adverse impacts that may arise from land and habitat disturbance due to undergrounding within, and in close proximity to, designated sites.

G.8.149 There are a number of additional SSSIs within the study area although these are smaller scattered sites which could be avoided by through careful routeing. Areas of ancient woodland within the study area are located in the northern and central portions of the study area. It is anticipated that direct impacts on these designated assets can be avoided through careful routeing due to their scattered nature.

Physical Environment Appraisal

G.8.150 Any OHL route between Creyke Beck and Weston Marsh would have to cross over several unavoidable watercourses and associated floodplains including the River Ouse, the River Ancholme, the River Witham and the River Welland. There is an opportunity to parallel the existing 4ZQ 400kV OHL which crosses the River Ouse.

G.8.151 Areas of GSPZ are present within the northern and central portions of the study area.

G.8.152 Flood Zones 2 and 3 cover large extents of the study area, in particular south of Skegness where Flood Zones 2 and 3 cover almost the entire extent. Given the extent of Flood Zones 2 and 3, it is likely that a significant amount of development would be located within the floodplain. Areas of Flood Zone 2 or 3 are expected to be a constraint for the siting of new substation infrastructure at Weston Marsh.

G.8.153 Crossings of main rivers, Flood Zone 2 or 3 and GSPZ are expected to be unavoidable. Standard protection measures would need to be applied during the construction phase and consider the areas of GSPZ and flood risk zones within the study area. Foundations would need to be designed accordingly.

ECO 4 Socio-economic Appraisal (Westward Direction)

Settlements and Populations Appraisal

G.8.154 There are a number of large urban areas within the study area including Scunthorpe, Immingham, Grimsby and Boston as well as numerous smaller towns and settlements scattered throughout. These areas would limit routeing opportunities at several points, particularly to the west and south of Grimsby where the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB is also a constraint. There is an opportunity for the new OHL to parallel the existing 4ZQ and 2KN/4KG 400kV OHLs especially to the northwest of Grimsby West.

G.8.155 Temporary adverse impacts associated with noise, air quality and construction traffic during construction could arise if the OHL and substation sites are situated within proximity to settlements. The potential for permanent adverse impacts would be dependent upon the proximity of the substation infrastructure. There is the potential for some adverse visual effects which are set out in the landscape and visual appraisal. The study area has a large amount of BMV agricultural land considered to be an economic resource. This includes areas of Grade 1 and Grade 2 BMV land particularly south of the Humber, southeast of Grimsby and in the southern portion of the study area south of Skegness. Agricultural land would be permanently lost due to the footprint of the pylons and substations at Grimsby West and Weston Marsh.

Tourism and Recreation Appraisal

G.8.156 The Yorkshire Wolds National Trail crosses the northern portion of the study area crossing the Wolds. There are a number of National Cycle Networks (NCN) routes which extend across the study area including the Trans Pennine Trail north of the Humber, NCN1 which runs from Lincoln to Kingston-upon-Hull, the NCN110 south of Grimsby, the Water Way Trail to Boston and the NCN1 running south from Boston.

G.8.157 There is the potential for temporary adverse effects associated with severance should the National Trail and NCN routes need to be temporarily closed during construction; however, effects would be temporary. There is the potential for some

adverse visual effects on users of the National Trail which are set out in the landscape and visual appraisal, and these effects would be permanent.

G.8.158 Standard best practice guidelines should be followed to provide appropriate signage, diversion routes and notice for the users of the NCN routes and National Trail should part of these routes or trails be closed during construction.

G.8.159 There are seven Country Parks within the study area. These include Waters Edge and Humber Bridge Country Parks located either side of the Humber Estuary, Normanby Hall Country Park located north of Scunthorpe, and Cleethorpes and Weelsby Woods Country Parks near Cleethorpes. These sites are considered to be avoidable. The Witham Way and Havenside Country Parks located to the west and east of Boston respectively are linear in nature and would need to be considered during routeing.

G.8.160 There is one National Trust holding present within the study area located at Gunby Park, near Spilsby which is considered to be avoidable by an overhead line.

G.8.161 The Lincolnshire coast and north Norfolk coast are popular tourist destinations with a number of coastal resorts and extensive areas of holiday accommodation. It is considered that effects upon the local tourist economy could be minimised through careful routing and design.

Infrastructure Appraisal

G.8.162 The road network within the northern portion of the study area comprises major routes including the M62, M181 and M180. Both the M180/A180 and M62/A63 would need to be crossed.

G.8.163 There are also a number of trunk roads and A roads within the study area the A180 to Grimsby, the A158 and A52 to Skegness, the A52 and A1121 to Boston, and the A16 and A17 which run north-south through the central and southern portions of the study area. A number of these roads would need to be crossed particularly where they extend across the study area from east to west.

G.8.164 There are several railway lines running within the study area particularly in the area around Scunthorpe, Immingham and Grimsby. Further south there is a railway line running south from Skegness to Boston onwards to Sleaford. A number of these railway lines would be unavoidable and would need to be crossed.

G.8.165 The crossing of roads and railways overhead is unlikely to be a major constraint given the required above ground clearance levels of the new 400kV OHL.

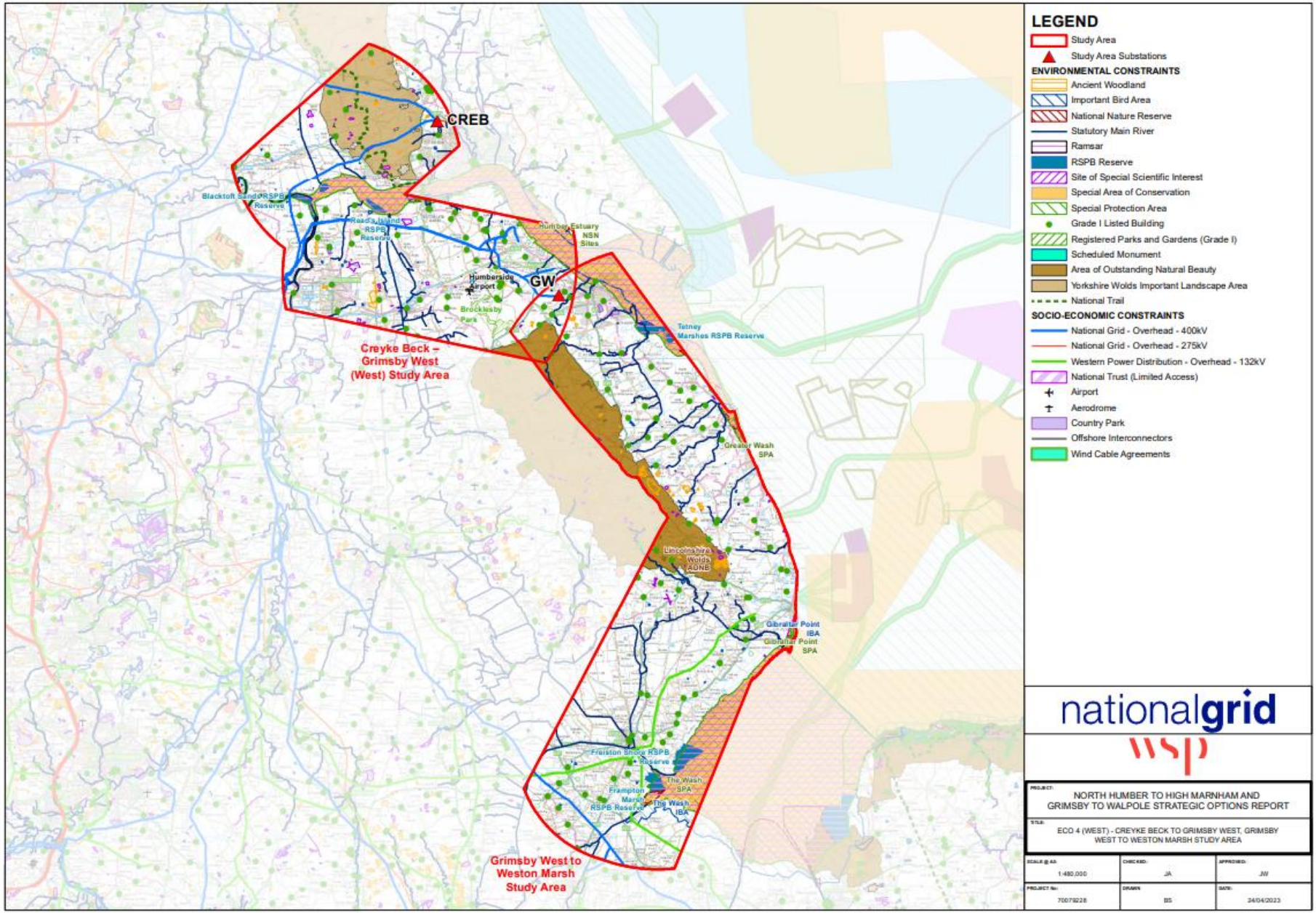
G.8.166 Humberside Airport and Aerodrome is located within the study area. RAF Wainfleet and RAF Holbeach are located on the very eastern boundary of the southern portion of the study area. There are also numerous additional airfields within the study area. The Airport, Aerodrome, RAF bases and airfields would be considered to be avoidable.

G.8.167 There is potential for aircraft flightpaths to cross the study area. The study area is partially within the CAA suggested safeguarding zone for Humberside Airport in the northern portion of the study area. All of the study area is located within a Ministry of Defence (MoD) low flying zone, the majority of which is low priority but also including an area of high priority at the northern end.

G.8.168 Aircraft flightpaths would need to be considered when routeing and siting the pylons. Aviation warning lighting may be required on the pylons.

ECO-4 (Westward Direction) Summary

G.8.169 Overall, this option is relatively constrained in relation to both ecological, landscape and visual considerations. The OHL would cross the Humber Estuary SPA, Ramsar and SSSI with potential for direct effects on breeding, over-wintering and passage bird species (collision risk) that are a qualifying feature of these designations. Whilst The Wash Ramsar Site, SSSI, SPA, IBA and National Nature Reserve, The Wash and North Norfolk Coast IBA and SAC, and Gibraltar Point Ramsar Site and IBA are avoidable there is the potential for adverse effects on the interest features both habitats and species for which a number of these sites are designated. Any project would need to demonstrate that it would not affect the integrity of designated sites. Based on the information available at this stage of the project's development, it is considered that a route could be identified at the routing and siting stage that would not affect the integrity of designated sites (once appropriate mitigation was taken into account). The OHL would cross the Yorkshire Wolds Important Landscape Area, and although the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB would be avoided by the OHL, there is potential for long-term effects on views from the AONB. There is potential for adverse effects on the setting of Brocklesby Park Registered Park and Garden as a result of the new OHL depending on routeing. There is potential for long term landscape and visual effects due to the introduction of new substation infrastructure at Weston Marsh in a landscape which currently has little major development. There would however be opportunities through more detailed assessment to prevent and/or reduce the potential for adverse effects. Other key environmental and socio-economic constraints are considered to be less influential with the potential to mitigate adverse impacts through careful consideration of routeing and siting and the use of appropriate technologies.


CREB
GW
Creyke Beck – Grimsby West (West) Study Area
Grimsby West to Weston Marsh Study Area
Blacktoft Sands RSPB Reserve
Read's Island RSPB Reserve
Humber Estuary NSN Sites
Humberside Airport
Brocklesby Park
Tetney Marshes RSPB Reserve
Greater Wash SPA
Lincolnshire Wolds AONB
Gibraltar Point IBA
Gibraltar Point SPA
Freiston Shore RSPB Reserve
Frampton Marsh RSPB Reserve
The Wash SPA
The Wash IBA
LEGEND
Study Area
Study Area Substations
ENVIRONMENTAL CONSTRAINTS
Ancient Woodland
Important Bird Area
National Nature Reserve
Statutory Main River
Ramsar
RSPB Reserve
Site of Special Scientific Interest
Special Area of Conservation
Special Protection Area
Grade I Listed Building
Registered Parks and Gardens (Grade I)
Scheduled Monument
Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
Yorkshire Wolds Important Landscape Area
National Trail
SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONSTRAINTS
National Grid - Overhead - 400kV
National Grid - Overhead - 275kV
Western Power Distribution - Overhead - 132kV
National Trust (Limited Access)
Airport
Aerodrome
Country Park
Offshore Interconnectors
Wind Cable Agreements
nationalgrid
wsp
NORTH HUMBER TO HIGH MARNHAM AND GRIMSBY TO WALPOLE STRATEGIC OPTIONS REPORT
ECO 4 (WEST) - CREYKE BECK TO GRIMSBY WEST, GRIMSBY WEST TO WESTON MARSH STUDY AREA
1:480,000
JA
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BS
24/04/2023

ECO-4 Creyke Beck to Grimsby West, Grimsby West to Weston Marsh substation(s) (Eastward Direction)

G.8.170 In order to undertake the environmental and socio-economic appraisal of the ECO-4 (East) option, a study area was established in which the project could reasonably be expected to be developed. For ECO-4 (East), it was identified that a straight-line route direct from Creyke Beck to Weston Marsh would be unrealistic due to the densely built-up urban centre of Kingston Upon Hull; routeing of any new infrastructure would need to avoid this area. The study area encompasses an area approximately 20km wide based on a broad route east from Creyke Beck around Kingston upon Hull, then heading south-east to a connection at Grimsby West, and southwards to Weston Marsh. The appraisal assumes that the substation equipment required at Creyke Beck would be delivered by others hence new substation works at Creyke Beck are excluded from this option. The appraisal assumes new substation equipment would be required at Grimsby West and Weston Marsh substation(s). Sites and features that might constrain the development of this option are detailed below.

ECO-4 (Eastward Direction) Environmental Appraisal

Landscape and Visual Appraisal

G.8.171 The nature of the landscape of the study area, with the exception of the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB located along the western extent of the central portion of the study area, is predominantly open expansive landscapes under intensive agriculture, with simple landscape patterns. There is little major development outside the main settlements.

G.8.172 Key sensitive visual receptors within the study area include users of the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB and coastal tourist resorts.

G.8.173 In the northern portion of the study area, there is little major development outside the main settlements, particularly in the wider area east of Kingston-Upon-Hull. Within the central portion of the study area the overall landform of the study area is flat and open, and generally rises towards the Lincolnshire Wolds. The predominant land use throughout the central and southern portions of the study area is arable farmland with little existing infrastructure outside of the road network, settlements, and a few onshore wind farms. The presence of wind farms off the Lincolnshire coast is recognised.

G.8.174 The Lincolnshire Wolds AONB itself would be avoided by the OHL and therefore direct impacts are unlikely, however views from the AONB are likely to be affected by the introduction of the new OHL infrastructure particularly given the low-lying open topography with views from the Wolds to the coast.

G.8.175 The OHL would need to be routed taking into account the pattern of the landscape to avoid settlements, visitor attractions and long-distance open views (particularly from the AONB and high ground) as far as possible.

G.8.176 There is an opportunity to parallel the YYW 275kV OHL east of Kingston-Upon-Hull and 2AD 400kV OHL south of the Humber to prevent the introduction of a completely new OHL route and concentrate landscape and visual effects in one location. There is also an option to consider replacement of the existing YYW 275kV OHL with the new OHL route.

G.8.177 In the central portion of the study area there is a potential opportunity to use the landform of the Wolds as a backdrop to reduce visual impact of the OHL, however this would need to be balanced with the need to avoid both the AONB and avoid intruding on views from AONB.

G.8.178 Subject to site selection there may be views of new substation infrastructure at Grimsby West substation from within the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB, however, opportunities exist to develop mitigation. The proximity of the existing Grimsby West substation to the fringes of the existing settlement may increase the potential for visual impacts.

G.8.179 In the southern portion of the study area there is potential for adverse landscape and visual impacts due to the introduction of a new substation(s) at Weston Marsh into a landscape which currently has very little major infrastructure outside the larger settlements.

G.8.180 This option is constrained in relation to landscape and visual considerations, with a number of opportunities to avoid constraints and for mitigation through more detailed assessment and siting which would prevent and/or reduce potential for adverse landscape and visual effects.

Historic Environment Appraisal

G.8.181 There are a number of scheduled monuments scattered throughout the study area. It is anticipated that direct impacts on these historic assets can be avoided through careful routeing due to their scattered nature. There is potential for adverse effects on the setting of Scheduled Monuments on both banks of the River Humber which present a constraint to the siting of the connection point between OHL and the tunnel.

G.8.182 A large number of listed buildings have been recorded throughout the study area, with the vast majority being Grade II listed, with fewer Grade I and II* listed buildings. These include listed buildings within 1km of the existing Grimsby West substation. The majority of these are associated with the settlements scattered throughout the study area. It is likely that listed buildings could be avoided by selecting appropriate route corridors and sensitive routeing.

G.8.183 There are a number of registered parks and gardens within the study area including Well Hall and Gunby Park which would be considered to be avoidable.

G.8.184 Whilst designated heritage assets are likely to be avoidable there is the potential for adverse impacts on the setting of such assets depending on the proximity of the OHL and substation infrastructure.

G.8.185 Physical impacts are likely to be limited to non-designated assets and previously unrecorded assets, although these were not assessed as part of this options appraisal.

G.8.186 Mitigation is expected to be required and could include a phased programme of works including geophysical survey, archaeological evaluation trenching, and archaeological excavation to mitigate physical impacts to non-designated assets / previously unrecorded assets. The design of any above ground infrastructure required, as well as screening/planting, could potentially mitigate impacts on the setting of designated assets where relevant.

Biological Environment Appraisal

G.8.187 The Humber Estuary SAC, SPA, Ramsar site and SSSI presents a major constraint for the routeing of the new OHL alignment in the northern portion of the study area; these designated sites extend from east to west across the study area. It is assumed that this option would require a 6km cable in a tunnel beneath the Humber. Any tunnelling whilst removing the impact of bird strike, could still have negative effects upon the Humber Estuary through disturbance and potential hydrogeological impacts particularly if above-ground infrastructure associated with tunnelling is sited close to the Humber.

G.8.188 The Wash Ramsar Site, SSSI, SPA, IBA and National Nature Reserve, The Wash and North Norfolk Coast SAC, the North Norfolk Coast Ramsar Site, IBA and SSSI, and Gibraltar Point Ramsar Site and IBA are located along the eastern boundary in the southern portion of the study area. Whilst these sites are avoidable there is the potential for adverse effects on the interest features both habitats and species for which a number of the sites are designated both during construction and operation.

G.8.189 There are a number of RSPB Reserves within the study area including Read's Island and Blacktoft Sands associated with the Humber Estuary, Tetney Marshes to the south of Cleethorpes and Frampton Marsh to the southeast of Boston.

G.8.190 There would be a need to follow the Habitats Regulations Assessment process to consider the effects of a crossing of the Humber. This would also need to encompass impacts upon The Wash SPA/SAC depending upon distance. Any project would need to demonstrate that it would not affect the integrity of these designated sites. Based on the information available at this stage of the project's development, it is considered that a route could be identified at the routing and siting stage that would not affect the integrity of designated sites (once appropriate mitigation was taken into account).

G.8.191 There is an opportunity to parallel the YYW 275kV OHL east of Kingston-Upon-Hull and 2AD 400kV OHL south of the Humber to prevent the introduction of a completely new OHL route and concentrate ecological effects in one location. There is also an option to consider replacement of the existing YYW 275kV OHL with the new OHL route.

G.8.192 There are a number of additional SSSIs within the study area although these are smaller scattered sites which could be avoided by through careful routeing. Areas of ancient woodland within the study area are located in the northern and central portions of the study area. It is anticipated that direct impacts on these designated assets can be avoided through careful routeing due to their scattered nature.

Physical Environment Appraisal

G.8.193 Any OHL route between Creyke Beck and Weston Marsh would have to cross over several unavoidable watercourses and associated floodplains including the Steeping River, the River Witham and the River Welland.

G.8.194 Areas of GSPZ are present throughout the study area.

G.8.195 Flood Zones 2 and 3 cover large extents of the study area, in particular south of Skegness where Flood Zones 2 and 3 cover almost the entire extent of the study area. Areas of Flood Zone 2 or 3 are expected to be a constraint for the siting of new substation infrastructure at Weston Marsh.

G.8.196 Crossings of main rivers, Flood Zone 2 or 3 and GSPZ are expected to be unavoidable. Standard protection measures would need to be applied during the construction phase and consider the areas of GSPZ and flood risk zones within the study area. Foundations would need to be designed accordingly.

ECO 4 (Eastward Direction) Socio-economic Appraisal

Settlements and Populations Appraisal

G.8.197 The large urban area of Kingston-Upon-Hull presents a constraint for routeing of a new OHL north of the Humber. Similarly, the urban areas of Grimsby and Boston present a constraint for routeing of a new OHL in the central and southern portion of the study area. The area around the Port of Hull and Port of Immingham is congested with existing infrastructure and may be a constraint for routeing and siting. There are also numerous smaller towns and settlements scattered throughout the study area and therefore limit routeing opportunities at several points, particularly to the west and south of Grimsby where the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB is also a constraint.

G.8.198 There is an opportunity for the new OHL to parallel the YYW 275kV OHL to the east of Kingston-Upon-Hull to allow avoidance of this urban area. However, urban sprawl and future major allocations should be a consideration to the north and east of Kingston-Upon-Hull given the limited space between the YYW 275kV OHL and the outskirts of the urban area. There is also an option to consider replacement of the existing YYW 275kV OHL with the new OHL route.

G.8.199 Temporary adverse impacts associated with noise, air quality and construction traffic during construction could arise if the OHL and substation sites are situated within proximity to settlements. The potential for permanent adverse impacts would be dependent upon the proximity of the substation infrastructure. There is the potential for some adverse visual effects which are set out in the landscape and visual appraisal.

G.8.200 The study area has a large amount of BMV agricultural land considered to be an economic resource. This includes areas of Grade 1 and Grade 2 BMV land particularly southeast of Grimsby and in the southern portion of the study area south of Skegness. Agricultural land would be permanently lost due to the footprint of the pylons and substations at Grimsby West and Weston Marsh.

Tourism and Recreation Appraisal

G.8.201 There are a number of National Cycle Networks (NCN) routes which extend across the study area including the Trans Pennine Trail north of the Humber, the NCN110 south of Grimsby, the Water Way Trail to Boston and the NCN1 running south from Boston.

G.8.202 There is the potential for temporary adverse effects associated with severance should the NCN routes need to be temporarily closed during construction; however, effects would be temporary.

G.8.203 Standard best practice guidelines should be followed to provide appropriate signage, diversion routes and notice for the users of the NCN routes should part of these routes or trails be closed during construction.

G.8.204 There are five Country Parks within the study area. These include Burton Constable Country Park east of Kingston-Upon-Hull and Cleethorpes and Weelsby Woods Country Parks near Cleethorpes. These sites are considered to be avoidable. The Witham Way and Havenside Country Parks located to the west and east of Boston respectively are linear in nature and would need to be considered during routeing.

G.8.205 There is one National Trust holding present within the study area located at Gunby Park, near Spilsby which is considered to be avoidable.

G.8.206 The Lincolnshire coast and north Norfolk coast are popular tourist destinations with a number of coastal resorts and extensive areas of holiday accommodation. It is considered that effects upon the local tourist economy could be minimised through careful routing and design.

Infrastructure Appraisal

G.8.207 The road network within the study area includes a number of A roads including the A165 to Kingston-Upon-Hull, the A180 to Grimsby, the A158 and A52 to Skegness, the A52 and A1121 to Boston, and the A16 and A17 which run north-south through the central and southern portions of the study area. A number of these roads would need to be crossed particularly where they extend across the study area from east to west.

G.8.208 There are several railway lines running within the study area particularly in and around the Port of Hull, Port of Immingham and Port of Grimsby. Further south there is a railway line running south from Skegness to Boston onwards to Sleaford. A number of these would be unavoidable and would need to be crossed.

G.8.209 The crossing of roads and railways overhead is unlikely to be a major constraint given the required above ground clearance levels of the new 400kV OHL.

G.8.210 The Port of Hull, the Port of Immingham and the Port of Grimsby are located in the northern portion section of the study area and would present a constraint to routeing.

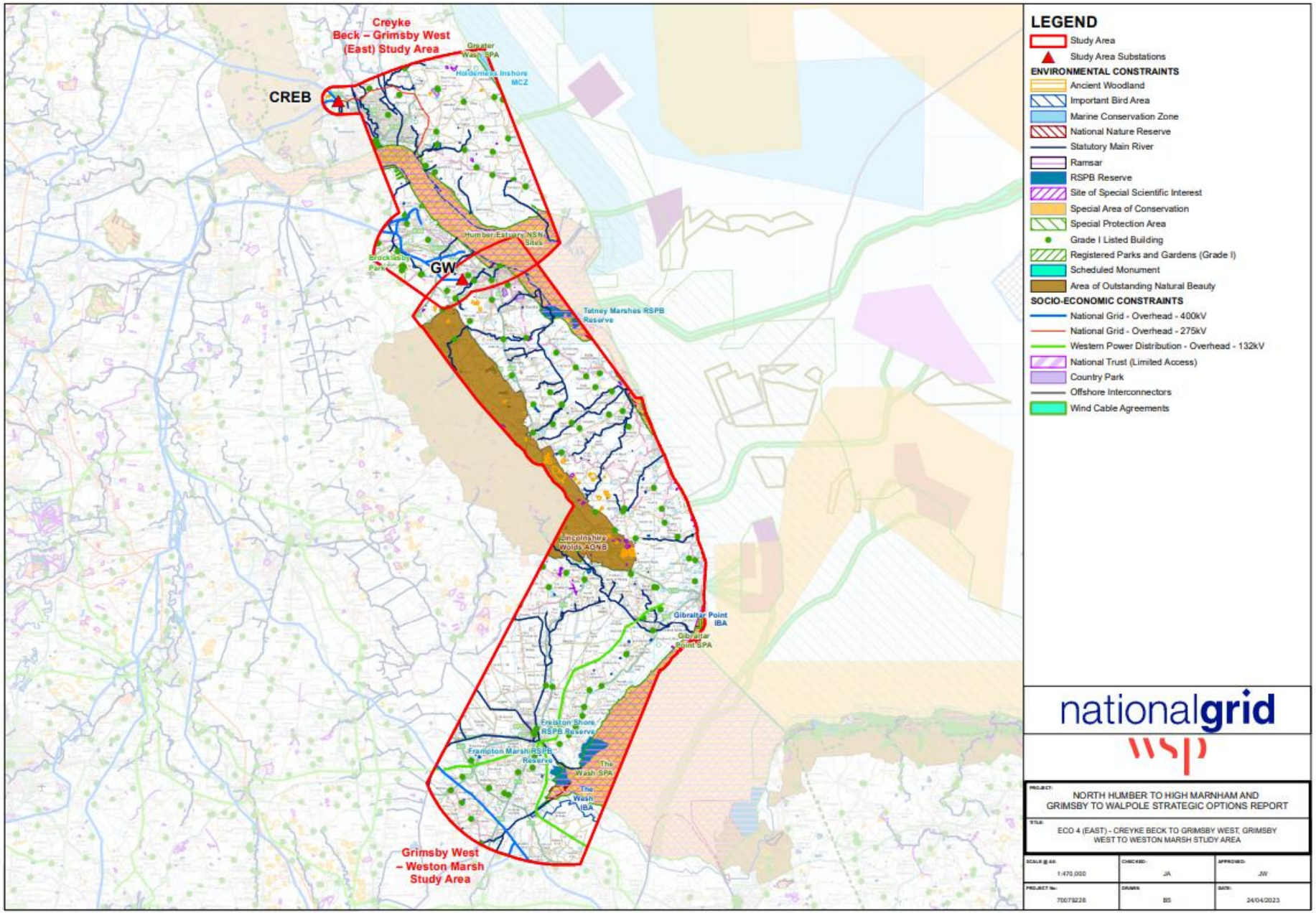
G.8.211 Humberside Airport and Aerodrome is located within the study area. RAF Wainfleet and RAF Holbeach are located on the very eastern boundary of the southern portion of the study area. There are also numerous additional airfields within the study area. The Airport, Aerodrome, RAF bases and airfields would be considered to be avoidable.

G.8.212 There is potential for aircraft flightpaths to cross the study area. The study area is partially within the CAA suggested safeguarding zone for Humberside Airport in the northern portion of the study area. All of the study area is located within a Ministry of Defence (MoD) low flying zone, the majority of which is low priority but also including an area of high priority at the northern end.

G.8.213 Aircraft flightpaths would need to be considered when routeing and siting the pylons. Aviation warning lighting may be required on the pylons. Mitigation may be necessary for the Met Radar Zone.

ECO-4 (Eastward Direction) Summary

G.8.214 Overall, this option is relatively constrained in relation to both ecological, landscape and visual considerations. Tunnelling beneath the Humber, whilst removing the impact of bird strike, could still have adverse effects upon the Humber Estuary through disturbance and potential hydrogeological impacts. Whilst The Wash Ramsar Site, SSSI, SPA, IBA and National Nature Reserve, The Wash and North Norfolk Coast IBA and SAC, and Gibraltar Point Ramsar Site and IBA are avoidable there is the potential for adverse effects on the interest features both habitats and species for which a number of these sites are designated. Any project would need to demonstrate that it would not affect the integrity of designated sites. Based on the information available at this stage of the project's development, it is considered that a route could be identified at the routing and siting stage that would not affect the integrity of designated sites (once appropriate mitigation was taken into account). The OHL would cross the Yorkshire Wolds Important Landscape Area, and although the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB would be avoided by the OHL, there is potential for long-term effects on views from the AONB. There is potential for long term landscape and visual effects due to the introduction of new substation infrastructure at Weston Marsh in a landscape which currently has little major development. There would however be opportunities through more detailed assessment to prevent and/or reduce the potential for adverse effects. Other key environmental and socio-economic constraints are considered to be less influential with the potential to mitigate adverse impacts through careful consideration of routeing and siting and the use of appropriate technologies.


Creyke Beck – Grimsby West (East) Study Area
CREB
GW
Greater Wash SPA
Holderness Inshore MCZ
Humber Estuary NSN Sites
Brocklesby Park
Tetney Marshes RSPB Reserve
Lincolnshire Wolds AONB
Gibraltar Point IBA
Gibraltar Point SPA
Freiston Shore RSPB Reserve
Frampton Marsh RSPB Reserve
The Wash SPA
The Wash IBA
Grimsby West – Weston Marsh Study Area
LEGEND
Study Area
Study Area Substations
ENVIRONMENTAL CONSTRAINTS
Ancient Woodland
Important Bird Area
Marine Conservation Zone
National Nature Reserve
Statutory Main River
Ramsar
RSPB Reserve
Site of Special Scientific Interest
Special Area of Conservation
Special Protection Area
Grade I Listed Building
Registered Parks and Gardens (Grade I)
Scheduled Monument
Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONSTRAINTS
National Grid - Overhead - 400kV
National Grid - Overhead - 275kV
Western Power Distribution - Overhead - 132kV
National Trust (Limited Access)
Country Park
Offshore Interconnectors
Wind Cable Agreements
nationalgrid
wsp
PROJECT: NORTH HUMBER TO HIGH MARNHAM AND GRIMSBY TO WALPOLE STRATEGIC OPTIONS REPORT
TITLE: ECO 4 (EAST) - CREYKE BECK TO GRIMSBY WEST, GRIMSBY WEST TO WESTON MARSH STUDY AREA
SCALE @ A0: 1:470,000
CHECKED: JA
APPROVED: JW
PROJECT No: 70079228
DRAWN: BS
DATE: 24/04/2023

G.9 ECSS 1 Creyke Beck to Walpole Subsea (Norfolk Coast)

G.9.1 In order to undertake the environmental and socio-economic appraisal of the ECSS 1 (Norfolk Coast) option, a study area was established in which the project could reasonably be expected to be developed. The study area encompasses an area approximately 20km wide based on a broad route east from Creyke Beck to the coast, then routeing southwards in the marine environment to avoid routeing for long extents within ecologically designated sites (including the Greater Wash SPA, Inner Dowsing, Race Bank and North Ridge SAC, The Wash SPA, and The Wash and North Norfolk Coast SAC) as far as possible, to facilitate landfall on the Norfolk coast then routeing to Walpole. The appraisal assumes an underground and subsea cable and new converter station equipment at both Creyke Beck and Walpole. Sites and features that might constrain the development of this option are detailed below. The description of sites and features is presented separately for i) the northern portion of the study area between Creyke Beck and the Lincolnshire coast, ii) the southern onshore portion of the study area between the Norfolk coast and Walpole, and iii) the marine portion of the study area. Note, an option to landfall via The Wash was considered to have a high likelihood of causing significant effects on The Wash SPA/SAC sites which form part of the UK's National Site Network, and hence a subsea option via The Wash was discounted.

ECSS 1 (Norfolk Coast) Environmental Appraisal

Northern onshore portion of the study area between Creyke Beck and the Lincolnshire coast

Landscape and Visual Appraisal

G.9.2 The nature of the landscape in the northern onshore portion of the study area between Creyke Beck and the Lincolnshire coast outside the urban area of Kingston-Upon-Hull is predominantly open expansive landscapes under intensive agriculture, with simple landscape patterns. Generally, the open intensive agricultural landscape and low-lying topography would likely be able to accommodate an underground cable with limited disturbance to landscape character.

G.9.3 It is likely some adverse residual permanent effects may occur during the operational phase of the converter stations at Creyke Beck.

Historic Environment Appraisal

G.9.4 There are a number of scheduled monuments scattered throughout the study area including a scheduled monument located within 1km of the existing Creyke Beck substation. It is anticipated that direct impacts on these historic assets can be avoided through careful routeing and siting due to their scattered nature.

G.9.5 A number of listed buildings and four registered parks and gardens including Burton Constable are located within the study area. It is expected that listed buildings and registered parks and gardens could be avoided by selecting an appropriate cable route corridor.

G.9.6 Whilst designated heritage assets are likely to be avoidable there is the potential for adverse impacts on the setting of such assets depending on the proximity of the converter station infrastructure at Creyke Beck.

G.9.7 Physical impacts are likely to be limited to non-designated assets and previously unrecorded assets, although these have not been assessed as part of this options appraisal.

G.9.8 Mitigation onshore is expected to be required and could include a phased programme of works including geophysical survey, archaeological evaluation trenching, and archaeological excavation to mitigate physical impacts to non-designated assets / previously unrecorded assets.

Biological Environment Appraisal

G.9.9 There are a number of scattered ecological designations within the study area including SSSIs including Hornsea Mere and areas of ancient woodland. It is anticipated that direct impacts on these designations can be avoided through careful routeing due to their scattered nature.

G.9.10 The Greater Wash SPA would need to be crossed via the subsea cable (see marine appraisal below). There is potential for adverse temporary effects on important habitats associated with this designated site.

Physical Environment Appraisal

G.9.11 The onshore cable would have to cross over several unavoidable watercourses and associated floodplains associated with the rivers around Creyke Beck. Areas of GSPZ are present and are largely concentrated within and around Creyke Beck.

G.9.12 Crossings of main rivers, Flood Zone 2 or 3 and GSPZ are expected to be unavoidable. Areas of GSPZ and potentially areas of Flood Zone 2 or 3 are expected to be a constraint for the siting of new converter station infrastructure at Creyke Beck. Standard protection measures would need to be applied during the construction phase and consider the areas of GSPZ and flood risk zones within the study area.

ECSS 1 Southern onshore portion of the study area between the Norfolk coast and Walpole

Landscape and Visual Appraisal

G.9.13 The Norfolk Coast AONB is located within the southern onshore portion of the study area between the Norfolk coast and Walpole. Crossing of the AONB at the coast would be unavoidable for this option. A section of the AONB to the northeast of Kings Lynn would also need to be considered as part of routeing studies. The North Norfolk Heritage Coast is also partially located within the study area.

G.9.14 Key sensitive visual receptors within the study area include users of the Norfolk Coast AONB, North Norfolk Heritage Coast and coastal tourist resorts along the coastline of the study area.

G.9.15 Views within and from both the AONB and Heritage Coast are likely to be affected albeit for a temporary period during the construction phase.

G.9.16 Peddar's Way and Norfolk Coast Path National Trail crosses the extent of the study area in two locations; along the coast and to the east of Kings Lynn. There is potential for adverse temporary visual effects on users of the National Trails.

G.9.17 It is likely some adverse residual permanent effects may occur during the operational phase of the converter stations at Walpole.

Historic Environment Appraisal

G.9.18 There are a number of scheduled monuments scattered throughout the study area. It is anticipated that direct impacts on these historic assets can be avoided through careful routeing and siting due to their scattered nature.

G.9.19 A number of listed buildings and registered parks and gardens including are located within the study area including registered parks and gardens at Holkham Hall, Hougton Hall and Sandringham House, and listed buildings within 1km of the existing Walpole substation. It is expected that listed buildings and registered parks and gardens could be avoided by selecting an appropriate cable route corridor.

G.9.20 Whilst designated heritage assets are likely to be avoidable there is the potential for adverse impacts on the setting of such assets depending on the proximity of the converter station infrastructure at Walpole.

G.9.21 Physical impacts are likely to be limited to non-designated assets and previously unrecorded assets, although these have not been assessed as part of this options appraisal.

G.9.22 Mitigation onshore is expected to be required and could include a phased programme of works including geophysical survey, archaeological evaluation trenching, and archaeological excavation to mitigate physical impacts to non-designated assets / previously unrecorded assets.

Biological Environment Appraisal

G.9.23 There are numerous ecological designations within the study area, particularly along the north Norfolk coastline where the cable would landfall. Designations include The Wash Ramsar Site, SSSI, SPA, IBA and National Nature Reserve, The Wash and North Norfolk Coast SAC, the North Norfolk Coast Ramsar Site, IBA and SSSI, Blakeney National Nature Reserve, and Holkham National Nature Reserve. Crossing of a number of these designations would be unavoidable.

G.9.24 The Greater Wash SPA would need to be crossed via the subsea cable (see marine appraisal below).

G.9.25 There are a number of additional SAC, Ramsar, National Nature Reserves and SSSI sites within the study area including Roydon Common and Dersingham Bog SAC, Ramsar, National Nature Reserve and SSSI sites, River Wensum SSSI, River Nar SSSI and Norfolk Valley Fens SAC. It is anticipated that the majority of these designated sites could be avoided through careful routeing.

G.9.26 There is one RSPB Reserve (Snettisham) and a number of areas of ancient woodland within the study area. It is anticipated that direct impacts on these designated sites can be avoided through careful routeing due to their scattered nature. There is the potential for adverse effects on the interest features (habitats and species) for which the ecological sites within the study area are designated

during construction. The potential for a likely significant effect would need to be considered in relation to the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.

Physical Environment Appraisal

G.9.27 The onshore cable would have to cross over several unavoidable watercourses and associated floodplains within the study area including the River Hull as well as a large number of drainage ditches.

G.9.28 Areas of GSPZ are present within the study area. Areas of Flood Zones 2 and 3 are mainly located along the coast and to the west of Kings Lynn.

G.9.29 Crossings of main rivers, Flood Zone 2 or 3 and GSPZ are expected to be unavoidable. Areas of Flood Zone 2 or 3 are expected to be a constraint for converter station siting at Walpole. Standard protection measures would need to be applied during the construction phase and consider the areas of GSPZ and flood risk zones within the study area.

ECSS 1 (Norfolk Coast) Socio-economic Appraisal

Northern onshore portion of the study area between Creyke Beck and the Lincolnshire coast

Settlements and Populations Appraisal

G.9.30 The large urban area of Kingston-Upon-Hull present a constraint for cable routeing. There are also numerous smaller settlements scattered throughout the study area which limit routeing opportunities at several points.

G.9.31 Temporary adverse impacts associated with noise, air quality and construction traffic during construction could arise if the cable route and converter station sites are situated within proximity to settlements. The potential for permanent adverse impacts would be dependent upon the proximity of the converter station infrastructure. There is the potential for some adverse visual effects which are set out in the landscape and visual appraisal.

G.9.32 The study area has a large amount of BMV agricultural land considered to be an economic resource. This includes areas of Grade 1 and Grade 2 BMV land south of the Humber. Grade 2 and 3 BMV agricultural land is the most prominent land type classification within the study area. Temporary effects on agricultural land would occur during the cable construction phase. Standard best practice guidelines should be followed to reinstate agricultural land following construction. Agricultural land would be permanently lost due to the footprint of the converter stations at Creyke Beck.

Tourism and Recreation Appraisal

G.9.33 There are a number of NCN routes within the study area including the Trans Pennine Trail which extends across the study area. There is the potential for temporary adverse effects associated with severance should this NCN route need to be temporarily closed during construction; however, effects would be temporary.

G.9.34 There is one Country Park within the study area: Burton Constable Country Park. This site is considered to be avoidable.

Infrastructure Appraisal

G.9.35 The road network within the study area includes a number of A roads including the A165 which runs north-south through the study area and the A1079. Both of these A roads would need to be crossed. A crossing of a railway line would be required to the east of Creyke Beck.

G.9.36 Beverley Aerodrome is located in the north western portion of the study area and RAF Cowden is located on the eastern boundary of the study area. Both would be considered to be avoidable.

G.9.37 There is potential for aircraft flightpaths to cross the study area. The study area is partially within the CAA suggested safeguarding zone for Beverley Aerodrome. All of the study area is located within a MoD low flying zone, the majority of which is low priority but also including an area of high priority around RAF Cowden. The low flying zone is not considered to be a constraint to routeing due to the underground nature of the cable. Aircraft flightpaths should be considered when siting the converter stations.

Southern onshore portion of the study area between the Norfolk coast and Walpole

Settlements and Populations Appraisal

G.9.38 The urban area of Kings Lynn as well as numerous smaller towns and settlements scattered throughout the study area present a constraint for routeing of an underground cable.

G.9.39 Temporary adverse impacts associated with noise, air quality and construction traffic during construction could arise if the cable route and converter station sites are situated within proximity to settlements. The potential for permanent adverse impacts would be dependent upon the proximity of the converter station infrastructure. There is the potential for some adverse visual effects which are set out in the landscape and visual appraisal.

G.9.40 Grade 2 and 3 BMV agricultural land is the most prominent land type classification within the study area. West of King's Lynn Grade 1 and Grade 2 BMV agricultural land is most prominent. Temporary effects on agricultural land would occur during the cable construction phase. Standard best practice guidelines should be followed to reinstate agricultural land following construction. Agricultural land would be permanently lost due to the footprint of the converter stations at Walpole.

Tourism and Recreation Appraisal

G.9.41 There are a number of NCN routes located within the study area including in the vicinity of Kings Lynn.

G.9.42 There is the potential for temporary adverse effects associated with severance should the NCN routes need to be temporarily closed during construction; however, effects would be temporary.

G.9.43 Standard best practice guidelines should be followed to provide appropriate signage, diversion routes and notice for the users of the NCN routes should part of these routes be closed during construction.

G.9.44 There is one Country Park within the study area: Sandringham. This site is considered to be avoidable.

G.9.45 There is a National Trust holding present within the study area located at Blakeney which is potentially avoidable.

G.9.46 The north Norfolk coast is a popular tourist destination with a number of coastal resorts and extensive areas of holiday accommodation. It is considered that effects upon the local tourist economy could be minimised through careful routing and design.

Infrastructure Appraisal

G.9.47 There are also a number of A roads within the study area including the A149, A10 and A17, some of which may need to be crossed.

G.9.48 There are railway lines in the vicinity of Kings Lynn and Wells-next-the-Sea which may need to be crossed.

G.9.49 All of the study area is located within a MoD low flying zone, the majority of which is low priority. The low flying zone is not considered to be a constraint to routeing due to the underground nature of the cable. Aircraft flightpaths should be considered when siting the converter stations.

ECSS 1 (Norfolk Coast) Marine Appraisal

G.9.50 Offshore there are a number of marine designated sites within the study area. At the north of the study area this includes the Holderness Inshore Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ), Holderness Offshore MCZ, and the Southern North Sea Special SAC which are all located off the coast to the east of Holderness. Although the Southern North Sea SAC and Holderness Offshore MCZ could potentially be avoided, the Holderness Inshore MCZ which extends along the coastline north of Spurn Head north of the Humber and is designated for subtidal habitats and ocean quahog, is within the study area and would require a cable crossing. It is acknowledged that the study area could be extended further north to avoid a crossing of the Holderness MCZ however this would extend the overall cable length and potentially require a crossing of the Holderness Offshore MCZ or the Southern North Sea Special SAC.

G.9.51 The Greater Wash SPA, which is designated for both breeding and non-breeding bird interests, falls with the study area at the coastal locations at both the north and south of the study area and would be unavoidable.

G.9.52 Appropriate routeing and mitigation would need to be considered at both these locations to avoid likely significant effects. The potential for a likely significant effect on these designated sites would need to be considered in relation to the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.

G.9.53 In the southern section of the study area along and off the north Norfolk coast are further marine designated sites including Cromer Shoal Chalk Beds MCZ, Holkham National Nature Reserve, Blakeney National Nature Reserve, North Norfolk Coast Ramsar site, North Norfolk Coast SSSI, North Norfolk Coast IBA, and The Wash and North Norfolk Coast SAC.

G.9.54 The majority of the remainder of these designated areas are likely to be avoidable when considered in isolation; however, due to the number and proximity of the designated sites along the north Norfolk coast – including Cromer Shoal Chalk Beds MCZ, The Wash and North Norfolk Coast SAC, Holkham National Nature Reserve,

and North Norfolk Coast Ramsar, SSSI and IBA - it would not be possible to avoid all of these designated areas, therefore careful routeing would need to be considered. The North Norfolk Coast SSSI, which supports nationally and internationally important numbers of various species of breeding or wintering waterbirds, covers the majority of the study area along the north Norfolk coast, therefore whilst avoiding it would be possible, to do so would limit options of subsea cable routes and landfall locations.

G.9.55 Within the study area other marine infrastructure is present including Westermost Rough offshore wind farm, Triton Knoll offshore wind farm, Sheringham Shoal offshore wind farm (and the proposed Sheringham Shoal Extension to the north and the east of the existing wind farm), Dudgeon Extension offshore wind farm (and the proposed Dudgeon Extension to the north of the existing wind farm), cable routes associated with Westermost Rough, Triton Knoll, Sheringham Shoal, Dudgeon and Hornsea One, Two and Three offshore wind farms, Viking Link marine cable route and various pipelines and oil and gas infrastructure. Whilst the offshore wind farms are avoidable, it is unlikely that crossings of cables and pipelines could be avoided entirely, including the Hornsea One and Two offshore wind farm cable routes and the Viking Link marine cable route.

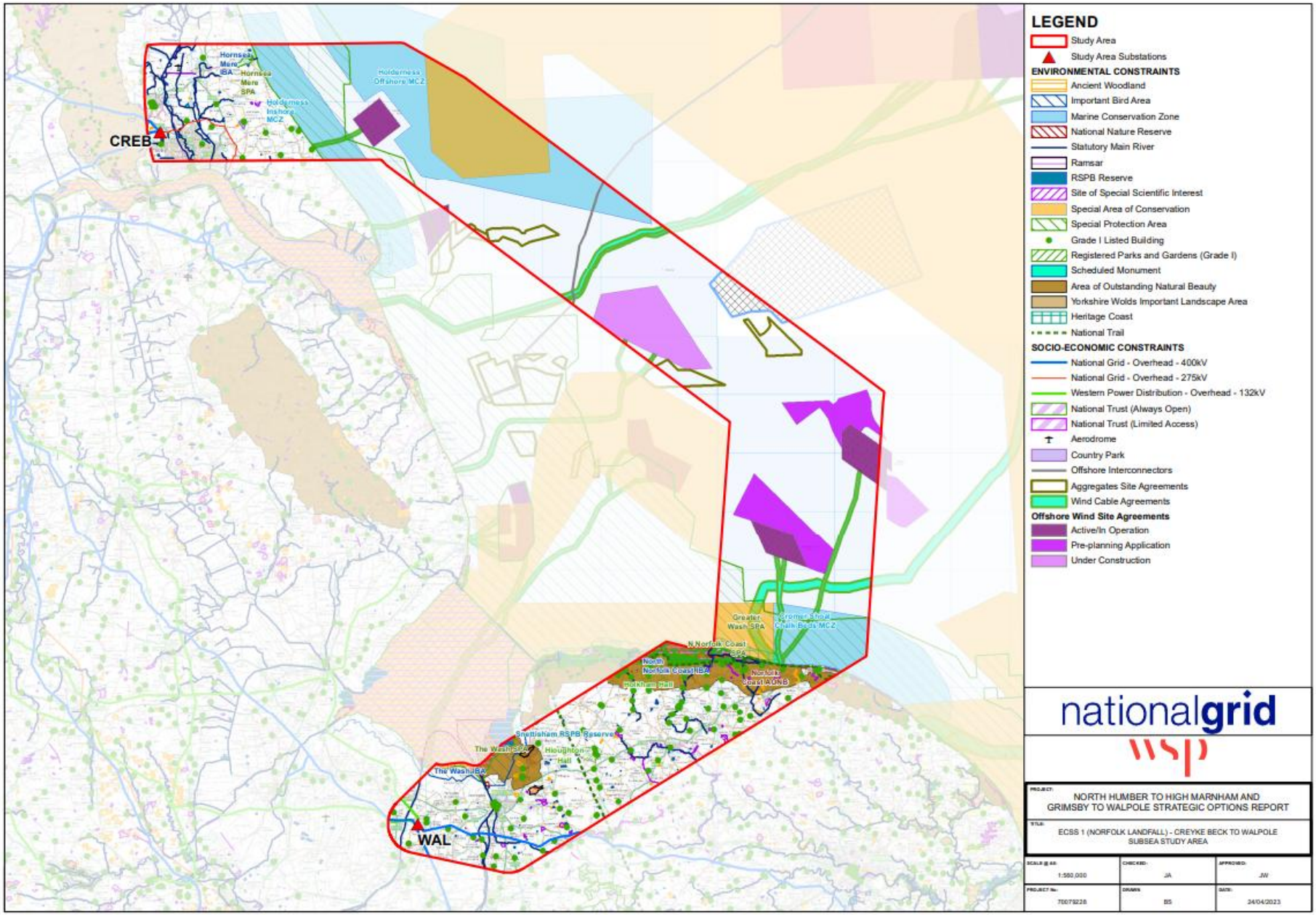
G.9.56 There are a number of marine aggregate dredging areas within the study area; these are mainly concentrated to the east of the Humber Gateway offshore wind farm and would influence cable routeing within the study area.

G.9.57 Shipping and navigation constraints may influence subsea cable routeing within the study area. The study area carries a moderate amount of traffic with several important commercial shipping routes to/from UK ports, particularly passenger vessels, oil and gas support vessels and cargo ships. In particular there are anchorages and traffic separation zones around the mouth of the Humber which coincide with vessel movements to/out of the Humber associated with access to various ports and harbours. Commercial shipping routes also exist to ports within The Wash including the Port of Boston.

G.9.58 There are a number of sandbanks, sandbank systems and other notable seabed features within the study area which may pose engineering challenges.

ECSS 1 (Norfolk Coast) Summary

G.9.59 Overall, this option is constrained in relation to ecological considerations. The Holderness Inshore MCZ and The Greater Wash SPA are within the study area and would require cable crossings. Although the study area could be extended further north to avoid a crossing of the Holderness MCZ, this would extend the overall cable length and potentially require a crossing of the Holderness Offshore MCZ or the Southern North Sea Special SAC. Also, due to the number and proximity of designated sites along the north Norfolk coast including Cromer Shoal Chalk Beds MCZ, The Wash and North Norfolk Coast SAC, Holkham National Nature Reserve, and North Norfolk Coast Ramsar, SSSI and IBA it would not be possible to avoid all of these designated areas. The potential for likely significant effects on designated sites would need to be considered in relation to the Habitats Directive. There are also potential heritage constraints which may result in potential effects on the setting of a number of Scheduled Monuments and listed buildings dependent on converter station siting especially in the Creyke Beck area. Other key environmental and socio-economic constraints are considered to be less influential with the potential to mitigate adverse impacts through careful consideration of routeing and siting and the use of appropriate technologies.


CREB
WAL
Holderness Offshore MCZ
Holderness Inshore MCZ
Hornsea Mere SPA
Hornsea Mere SPA
Greater Wash SPA
Cromer Shoal Chalk Beds MCZ
N.Norfolk Coast SPA
North Norfolk Coast IBA
Norfolk Coast AONB
Holkham Hall
Snettisham RSPB Reserve
The Wash SPA
Houghton Hall
The Wash IBA
LEGEND
Study Area
Study Area Substations
ENVIRONMENTAL CONSTRAINTS
Ancient Woodland
Important Bird Area
Marine Conservation Zone
National Nature Reserve
Statutory Main River
Ramsar
RSPB Reserve
Site of Special Scientific Interest
Special Area of Conservation
Special Protection Area
Grade I Listed Building
Registered Parks and Gardens (Grade I)
Scheduled Monument
Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
Yorkshire Wolds Important Landscape Area
Heritage Coast
National Trail
SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONSTRAINTS
National Grid - Overhead - 400kV
National Grid - Overhead - 275kV
Western Power Distribution - Overhead - 132kV
National Trust (Always Open)
National Trust (Limited Access)
Aerodrome
Country Park
Offshore Interconnectors
Aggregates Site Agreements
Wind Cable Agreements
Offshore Wind Site Agreements
Active/In Operation
Pre-planning Application
Under Construction
nationalgrid
wsp
PROJECT:
NORTH HUMBER TO HIGH MARNHAM AND GRIMSBY TO WALPOLE STRATEGIC OPTIONS REPORT
TITLE:
ECSS 1 (NORFOLK LANDFALL) - CREYKE BECK TO WALPOLE SUBSEA STUDY AREA
SCALE @ A3:
1:560,000
CHECKED:
JA
APPROVED:
JW
PROJECT No:
70079228
DRAWN:
BS
DATE:
24/04/2023

G.10 ECSS 1 Creyke Beck to Walpole Subsea (Lincolnshire Coast)

G.10.1 In order to undertake the environmental and socio-economic appraisal of the ECSS 1 (Lincolnshire Coast) option, a study area was established in which the project could reasonably be expected to be developed. The study area encompasses an area approximately 20km wide based on a broad route east from Creyke Beck to the coast, then routeing southwards in the marine environment to facilitate landfall on the Lincolnshire coast avoiding landfall within ecologically designated sites associated with the Humber Estuary and The Wash as far as possible, then routeing to Walpole. The appraisal assumes an underground and subsea cable and new converter station equipment at both Creyke Beck and Walpole. Sites and features that might constrain the development of this option are detailed below. The description of sites and features is presented separately for i) the northern portion of the study area between Creyke Beck and the Lincolnshire coast, ii) the southern onshore portion of the study area between the Norfolk coast and Walpole, and iii) the marine portion of the study area.

ECSS 1 (Lincolnshire Coast) Environmental Appraisal

Northern onshore portion of the study area between Creyke Beck and the Lincolnshire coast

G.10.2 The environmental appraisal for the northern portion of the onshore study area for ECSS 1 (Lincs) between Creyke Beck and the Lincolnshire coast would be as for the northern portion of the onshore study area for ECSS 1 (Norfolk).

Southern onshore portion of the study area between the Lincolnshire coast and Walpole

Landscape and Visual Appraisal

G.10.3 The nature of the landscape of the study area, with the exception of the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB located west of Burgh le Marsh, is predominantly low-lying flat lands, under intensive agriculture, with smaller areas of gentle relief.

G.10.4 Key sensitive visual receptors within the study area include users of the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB and coastal tourist resorts along the coastline of the study area.

G.10.5 The Lincolnshire Wolds AONB itself would be expected to be avoided. It is likely some adverse residual permanent effects may occur during the operational phase of the converter stations at Walpole.

Historic Environment Appraisal

G.10.6 There are a number of scheduled monuments scattered throughout the study area. It is anticipated that direct impacts on these historic assets can be avoided through careful routeing due to their scattered nature.

G.10.7 There are a number of registered parks and gardens within the study area including Well Hall and Gunby Park which would be considered to be avoidable.

G.10.8 Whilst designated heritage assets are likely to be avoidable there is the potential for adverse impacts on the setting of such assets depending on the proximity of the converter station infrastructure at Walpole.

G.10.9 Physical impacts are likely to be limited to non-designated assets and previously unrecorded assets, although these have not been assessed as part of this options appraisal.

G.10.10 Mitigation onshore is expected to be required and could include a phased programme of works including geophysical survey, archaeological evaluation trenching, and archaeological excavation to mitigate physical impacts to non-designated assets / previously unrecorded assets.

Biological Environment Appraisal

G.10.11 There are numerous ecological designations within the study area, particularly along the Lincolnshire coastline where the cable would landfall. Designations include the Humber Estuary SAC, SPA, Ramsar site and SSSI, Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Dunes and Gibraltar Point SAC and Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Sand Dunes SSSI. Subject to landfall selection there is the potential to impact statutory ecological designations.

G.10.12 The Greater Wash SPA would need to be crossed via the subsea cable (see marine appraisal below).

G.10.13 The Wash Ramsar Site, SSSI, SPA, IBA and National Nature Reserve, and The Wash and North Norfolk Coast IBA and SAC are located along the eastern boundary in the southern portion of the study area. There are two RSPB Reserves within the study area: Freiston Shore and Frampton Marsh to the southeast of Boston. Whilst these sites are avoidable there is the potential for adverse effects on the interest features, both habitats and species, for which a number of these sites are designated during construction.

G.10.14 The potential for a likely significant effect would need to be considered in relation to the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.

G.10.15 There are a number of additional SSSIs including Chapel Point to Wolla Bank SSSI and areas of ancient woodland within the study area although these are smaller scattered sites which could be avoided by through careful routeing.

Physical Environment Appraisal

G.10.16 The onshore cable would have to cross over several unavoidable watercourses and associated floodplains including the Steeping River, the River Witham, the River Welland and the River Nene, as well as a large number of drainage ditches.

G.10.17 Areas of GSPZ are present throughout the study area.

G.10.18 Flood Zones 2 and 3 cover large extents of the study area, in particular south of Skegness where Flood Zones 2 and 3 cover almost the entire extent of the study area.

G.10.19 Crossings of main rivers, Flood Zone 2 or 3 and GSPZ are expected to be unavoidable. Areas of Flood Zone 2 or 3 are expected to be a constraint for the siting of converter station infrastructure at Walpole. Standard protection measures would need to be applied during the construction phase and consider the areas of GSPZ and flood risk zones within the study area. Foundations would need to be designed accordingly.

ECSS 1 (Lincolnshire Coast) Socio-economic Appraisal

Northern onshore portion of the study area between Creyke Beck and the Lincolnshire coast

G.10.20 The socio-economics appraisal for the northern portion of the onshore study area for ECSS 1 (Lincs) between Creyke Beck and the Lincolnshire coast would be as for the northern portion of the onshore study area for ECSS 1 (Norfolk).

Southern onshore portion of the study area between the Lincolnshire coast and Walpole

Settlements and Populations Appraisal

G.10.21 The urban area of Boston as well as numerous smaller towns and settlements scattered throughout the study area present a constraint for routeing of an underground cable. A key characteristic of a number of the coastal settlements is that they tend to have a linear pattern and extend along the coast as opposed to extending inland. This increases the built development fronting onto the coastline and in a number of areas would limit opportunities for cable landfall.

G.10.22 Temporary adverse impacts associated with noise, air quality and construction traffic during construction could arise if the cable route and converter station sites are situated within proximity to settlements. The potential for permanent adverse impacts would be dependent upon the proximity of the converter station infrastructure. There is the potential for some adverse visual effects which are set out in the landscape and visual appraisal. Grade 1 and 2 BMV agricultural land is the most prominent land type classification within the study area. Temporary effects on agricultural land would occur during the cable construction phase. Standard best practice guidelines should be followed to reinstate agricultural land following construction. Agricultural land would be permanently lost due to the footprint of the converter stations at Walpole.

Tourism and Recreation Appraisal

G.10.23 There are a number of National Cycle Networks (NCN) routes which extend across the study area including the Water Way Trail to Boston, the NCN1 running south from Boston and NCN1 from Boston towards Wisbech.

G.10.24 There is the potential for temporary adverse effects associated with severance should the NCN routes need to be temporarily closed during construction; however, effects would be temporary.

G.10.25 Standard best practice guidelines should be followed to provide appropriate signage, diversion routes and notice for the users of the NCN routes should part of these routes be closed during construction.

G.10.26 There are two Country Parks within the study area: Witham Way and Havenside Country Parks located to the west and east of Boston respectively. These sites are linear in nature and would need to be considered during routeing.

G.10.27 There is one National Trust holding present within the study area located at Gunby Park, near Spilsby which is considered to be avoidable.

G.10.28 The Lincolnshire coast and north Norfolk coast are popular tourist destinations with a number of coastal resorts and extensive areas of holiday accommodation. It is

considered that effects upon the local tourist economy could be minimised through careful routing and design.

Infrastructure Appraisal

G.10.29 The road network within the study area includes a number of A roads including the A158 and A52 to Skegness, the A52 and A1121 to Boston, and the A16 and A17 which run north-south through the central and southern portions of the study area. A number of these roads would need to be crossed particularly where they extend across the study area from east to west.

G.10.30 There is a railway line running south from Skegness to Boston onwards to Sleaford. This railway line would be unavoidable and would need to be crossed.

G.10.31 Fenland Aerodrome is located to the southwest of Spalding. RAF Wainfleet and RAF Holbeach are located on the eastern boundary of the study area. The Aerodrome and RAF bases and would be considered to be avoidable.

G.10.32 There is potential for aircraft flightpaths to cross the study area. The study area is partially within the CAA suggested safeguarding zone for Fenland Aerodrome. All of the study area is located within a MoD low flying zone, the majority of which is low priority. The low flying zone is not considered to be a constraint to routeing due to the underground nature of the cable. Aircraft flightpaths should be considered when siting the converter stations.

ECSS 1 (Lincolnshire Coast) Marine Appraisal

G.10.33 Offshore there are a number of marine designated sites within this study area. These includes the Holderness Inshore Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ), Holderness Offshore MCZ, and the Southern North Sea Special SAC which are all located off the coast to the east of Holderness. Although the Southern North Sea SAC and Holderness Offshore MCZ could potentially be avoided, the Holderness Inshore MCZ which extends along the coastline north of Spurn Head north of the Humber and is designated for subtidal habitats and ocean quahog, is within the study area and would require a cable crossing. Although the study area could be extended further north to avoid a crossing of the Holderness MCZ, this would extend the overall cable length and potentially require a crossing of the Holderness Offshore MCZ or the Southern North Sea Special SAC.

G.10.34 The Greater Wash SPA, which is designated for both breeding and non-breeding bird interests, falls within the study area at the coastal locations at both the north and south of the study area and would be unavoidable.

G.10.35 Appropriate routeing and mitigation would need to be considered at both these locations to avoid likely significant effects. The potential for a likely significant effect on these designated sites would need to be considered in relation to the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.

G.10.36 The Humber Estuary SAC, SPA, Ramsar site and SSSI, Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Dunes and Gibraltar Point SAC and Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Sand Dunes SSSI extend into the southern section of the study area along the Lincolnshire coastline; however, these designated sites are potentially avoidable subject to landfall selection and subsea cable installation methods.

G.10.37 Within the study area other marine infrastructure is present including Westermost Rough offshore wind farm and Humber Gateway offshore wind farm, cable routes associated with the aforementioned offshore wind farms, Triton Knoll and Hornsea One, Two and Three offshore wind farm cable routes, Viking Link marine cable route and various pipelines and oil and gas infrastructure. Whilst the offshore wind farms are avoidable, it is unlikely that crossings of cables and pipelines could be avoided entirely, including the Hornsea One and Two offshore wind farm cable routes and the Viking Link marine cable route.

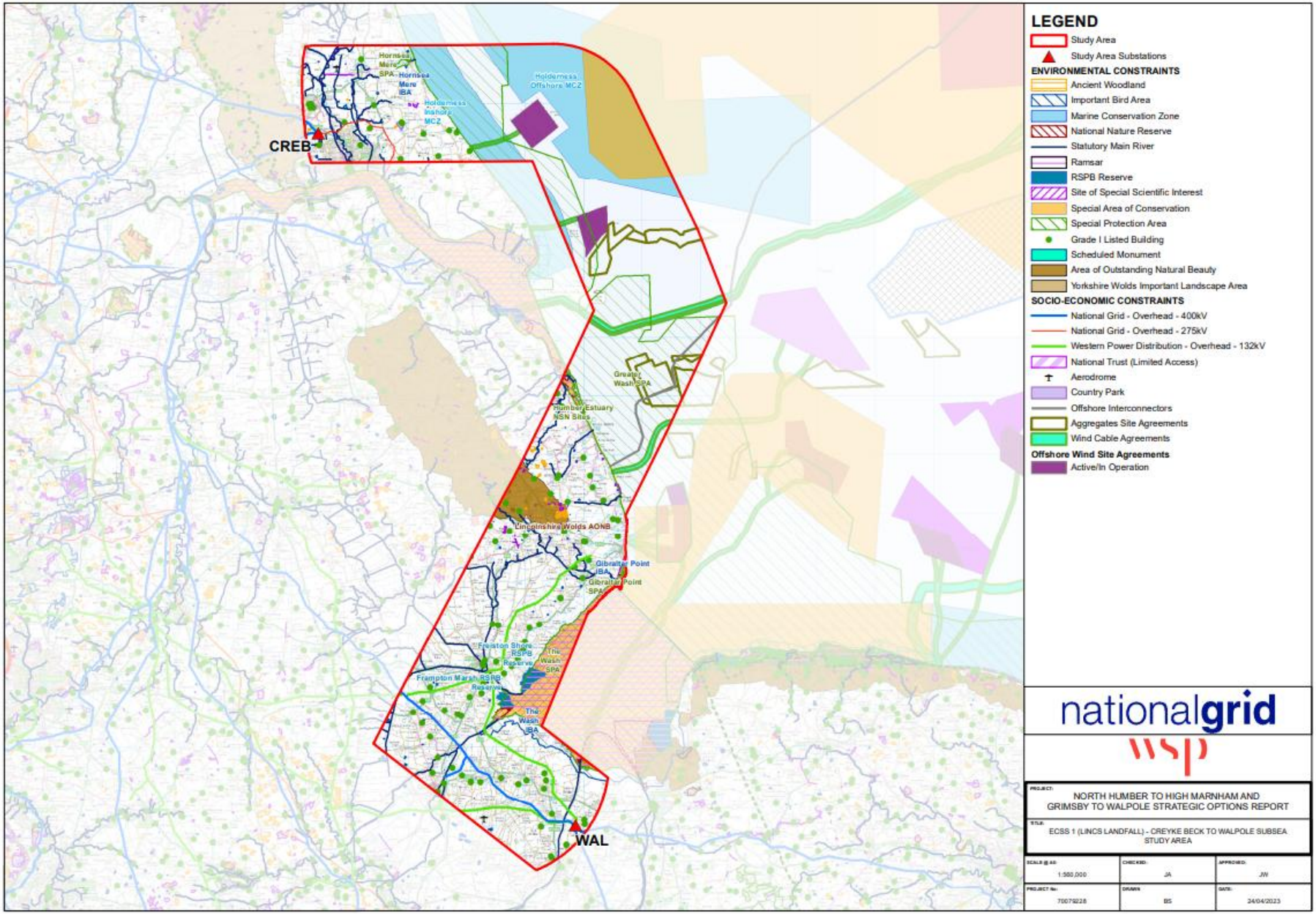
G.10.38 There are a number of marine aggregate dredging areas within the study area; these are mainly concentrated to the east of the Humber Gateway offshore wind farm and approximately 10km east of the coast at Mablethorpe, all of which would influence cable routeing within the study area.

G.10.39 Shipping and navigation constraints may influence subsea cable routeing within the study area. Shipping routes tend to be located further offshore and orientated north to south, however, there are anchorages and traffic separation zones around the mouth of the Humber within inshore waters which coincide with vessel movements to/out of the Humber associated with access to various ports and harbours.

G.10.40 The MoD Donna Nook Military Practice and Exercise Area (PEXA) which extends along the coast south of Northcotes Point to north of Theddlethorpe St Helens and out into inshore waters for approximately 15 km is partially within the study area.

ECSS 1 (Lincolnshire Coast) Summary

G.10.41 Overall, this option is relatively less constrained that ECSS 1 (Norfolk Coast) in relation to ecological considerations. The Holderness Inshore MCZ and The Greater Wash SPA are within the study area and would require cable crossings. Although the study area could be extended further north to avoid a crossing of the Holderness MCZ, this would extend the overall cable length and potentially require a crossing of the Holderness Offshore MCZ. Designated sites along the Lincolnshire coastline are potentially avoidable subject to landfall selection and subsea cable installation methods. The potential for likely significant effects on designated sites would need to be considered in relation to the Habitats Directive. There are also potential heritage constraints which may result in potential effects on the setting of a number of Scheduled Monuments and listed buildings dependent on converter station siting especially in the Creyke Beck area. Other key environmental and socio-economic constraints are considered to be less influential with the potential to mitigate adverse impacts through careful consideration of routeing and siting and the use of appropriate technologies.


CREB
WAL
Hornsea Mere SPA
Hornsea Mere IBA
Holderness Offshore MCZ
Holderness Inshore MCZ
Greater Wash SPA
Humber Estuary NSN Sites
Lincolnshire Wolds AONB
Gibraltar Point IBA
Gibraltar Point SPA
Freston Shore RSPB Reserve
Frampton Marsh RSPB Reserve
The Wash SPA
The Wash IBA
LEGEND
Study Area
Study Area Substations
ENVIRONMENTAL CONSTRAINTS
Ancient Woodland
Important Bird Area
Marine Conservation Zone
National Nature Reserve
Statutory Main River
Ramsar
RSPB Reserve
Site of Special Scientific Interest
Special Area of Conservation
Special Protection Area
Grade I Listed Building
Scheduled Monument
Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
Yorkshire Wolds Important Landscape Area
SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONSTRAINTS
National Grid - Overhead - 400kV
National Grid - Overhead - 275kV
Western Power Distribution - Overhead - 132kV
National Trust (Limited Access)
Aerodrome
Country Park
Offshore Interconnectors
Aggregates Site Agreements
Wind Cable Agreements
Offshore Wind Site Agreements
Active/In Operation
nationalgrid
wsp
NORTH HUMBER TO HIGH MARNHAM AND GRIMSBY TO WALPOLE STRATEGIC OPTIONS REPORT
ECSS 1 (LINCS LANDFALL) - CREYKE BECK TO WALPOLE SUBSEA STUDY AREA
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24/04/2023

G.11 ECO-5 Grimsby West to Lincolnshire Connection Substation(s), Lincolnshire Connection Substation(s) to Walpole

G.11.1 In order to undertake the environmental and socio-economic appraisal of the ECO-5 option, a study area was established in which the project could reasonably be expected to be developed. The study area encompasses an area approximately 20km wide based on a broad route from Grimsby West southwards to two Lincolnshire Connection substation(s) (assumed to be located within a broad strategic zone between the Coast and the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB) and onwards to Walpole. The appraisal assumes new substation equipment would be required at Grimsby West, two Lincolnshire Connection Substations and Walpole. Sites and features that might constrain the development of this option are detailed below.

ECO-5 Environmental Appraisal

Landscape and Visual Appraisal

G.11.2 The nature of the landscape of the study area, with the exception of the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB located along the western extent of the northern portion of the study area, is predominantly low-lying flat lands, under intensive agriculture, with smaller areas of gentle relief.

G.11.3 Key sensitive visual receptors within the study area include users of the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB and coastal tourist resorts along the coastline of the study area.

G.11.4 Within the northern portion of the study area the overall landform of the study area is flat and open, and generally rises towards the Lincolnshire Wolds. The predominant land use throughout the study area is arable farmland with little existing infrastructure outside of the road network, settlements, and a few onshore wind farms. The presence of wind farms off the Lincolnshire coast is recognised.

G.11.5 The Lincolnshire Wolds AONB itself would be avoided by the OHL and therefore direct impacts are unlikely, however views from the AONB are likely to be affected by the introduction of the new OHL infrastructure particularly given the low-lying open topography with views from the Wolds to the coast.

G.11.6 The OHL would need to be routed taking into account the pattern of the landscape to avoid settlements, visitor attractions and long-distance open views (particularly from the AONB and high ground) as far as possible.

G.11.7 In the northern portion of the study area there is a potential opportunity to use the landform of the Wolds as a backdrop to reduce visual impact of the OHL, however this would need to be balanced with the need to both avoid the AONB and avoid intruding on views from AONB.

G.11.8 Subject to site selection there may be views of new substation infrastructure at Grimsby West substation from within the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB, however, opportunities exist to develop mitigation. The proximity of the existing Grimsby West substation to the fringes of the existing settlement may increase the potential for visual impacts.

G.11.9 New substation infrastructure at the Lincolnshire Connection Substation(s) would introduce transmission infrastructure in a landscape which currently has little major development. The coastal settlements and the coastal strip are likely to be particularly sensitive. Consideration would need to be given to avoid siting of each of the two Lincolnshire Connection Substation(s) in an open position or in close proximity to the coastline where substation infrastructure is likely to be considered intrusive. There may be potential for views of the new Lincolnshire Connection Substation(s) infrastructure from within the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB depending on site selection.

G.11.10 In the southern portion of the study area there is potential for adverse landscape and visual impacts due to the introduction of a new substation at Walpole.

G.11.11 This option is constrained in relation to landscape and visual considerations, with a number of opportunities to avoid constraints and for mitigation through more detailed assessment and siting which would prevent and/or reduce potential for adverse landscape and visual effects.

Historic Environment Appraisal

G.11.12 There are a number of scheduled monuments scattered throughout the study area. It is anticipated that direct impacts on these historic assets can be avoided through careful routeing due to their scattered nature.

G.11.13 A large number of listed buildings have been recorded throughout the study area, with the vast majority being Grade II listed, with fewer Grade I and II* listed buildings. The majority of these are associated with the settlements scattered throughout the study area. These include listed buildings within 1km of the existing Grimsby West substation and Walpole substation. It is likely that listed buildings could be avoided by selecting appropriate route corridors and sensitive routeing and siting.

G.11.14 There are a number of registered parks and gardens within the study area, the largest of which is the Grade I listed Registered Park and Garden of Brocklesby Park. Routeing to the west of Grimsby would need to avoid this registered park and garden.

G.11.15 Whilst designated heritage assets are likely to be avoidable there is the potential for adverse impacts on the setting of such assets depending on the proximity of the OHL and new substation infrastructure.

G.11.16 Physical impacts are likely to be limited to non-designated assets and previously unrecorded assets, although these were not assessed as part of this options appraisal.

G.11.17 Mitigation is expected to be required and could include a phased programme of works including geophysical survey, archaeological evaluation trenching, and archaeological excavation to mitigate physical impacts to non-designated assets / previously unrecorded assets. The design of any above ground infrastructure required, as well as screening/planting, could potentially mitigate impacts on the setting of designated assets where relevant.

Biological Environment Assessment

G.11.18 The Humber Estuary SAC, SPA, Ramsar site and SSSI are located along the coast in the northern portion of the study area.

G.11.19 The Wash Ramsar Site, SSSI, SPA, IBA and National Nature Reserve, The Wash and North Norfolk Coast IBA and SAC, and Gibraltar Point Ramsar Site and IBA are located along the eastern boundary in the southern portion of the study area.

G.11.20 There are a number of RSPB Reserves within the study area including Tetney Marshes to the south of Cleethorpes and Frampton Marsh to the southeast of Boston.

G.11.21 Whilst these sites are avoidable there is the potential for adverse effects on the interest features both habitats and species for which a number of these sites are designated both during construction and operation. Any project would need to demonstrate that it would not affect the integrity of designated sites. Based on the information available at this stage of the project's development, it is considered that a route could be identified at the routing and siting stage that would not affect the integrity of designated sites (once appropriate mitigation was taken into account).

G.11.22 There are a number of additional SSSIs within the study area although these are smaller scattered sites which could be avoided by through careful routeing. Areas of ancient woodland within the study area are located in the northern and central portions of the study area. It is anticipated that direct impacts on these designated sites can be avoided through careful routeing due to their scattered nature.

Physical Environment Appraisal

G.11.23 Any OHL route between Grimsby West and Walpole would have to cross over several unavoidable watercourses and associated floodplains including the River Witham, the River Welland and the River Nene.

G.11.24 Areas of GSPZ are present within the northern and central portions of the study.

G.11.25 Flood Zones 2 and 3 cover large extents of the study area, in particular south of Skegness where Flood Zones 2 and 3 cover almost the entire extent of the study area. Given the extent of Flood Zones 2 and 3 across the study area, it is likely that a significant amount of development would be located within the floodplain.

G.11.26 Crossings of main rivers, Flood Zone 2 or 3 and GSPZ are expected to be unavoidable. Areas of Flood Zone 2 or 3 are expected to be a constraint for the siting of new substation infrastructure at Walpole, and potentially at the Lincolnshire Connection Substation(s). Standard protection measures would need to be applied during the construction phase and consider the areas of GSPZ and flood risk zones within the study area. Foundations would need to be designed accordingly.

ECO 5 Socio-economic Appraisal

Settlements and Populations Appraisal

G.11.27 There are a number of large urban areas within the study area including Grimsby and Boston as well as numerous smaller towns and settlements scattered throughout. These areas would limit routeing opportunities at several points, particularly to the west and south of Grimsby where the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB is also a constraint.

G.11.28 Temporary adverse impacts associated with noise, air quality and construction traffic during construction could arise if the OHL and substation sites are situated within proximity to settlements. The potential for permanent adverse impacts would be dependent upon the proximity of the substation infrastructure. There is the potential

for some adverse visual effects which are set out in the landscape and visual appraisal.

G.11.29 The study area has a large amount of BMV agricultural land considered to be an economic resource. This includes areas of Grade 1 and Grade 2 BMV land particularly southeast of Grimsby and in the southern portion of the study area south of Skegness. Agricultural land would be permanently lost due to the footprint of the pylons and substations at Grimsby West, the Lincolnshire Connection Substation(s) and Walpole.

Tourism and Recreation Appraisal

G.11.30 There are a number of National Cycle Networks (NCN) routes which extend across the study area including the NCN110 south of Grimsby, the Water Way Trail to Boston and NCN1 from Boston to Wisbech.

G.11.31 There is the potential for temporary adverse effects associated with severance should the NCN routes need to be temporarily closed during construction; however, effects would be temporary.

G.11.32 Standard best practice guidelines should be followed to provide appropriate signage, diversion routes and notice for the users of the NCN routes should part of these routes or trails be closed during construction.

G.11.33 There are four Country Parks within the study area. These include Cleethorpes and Weelsby Woods Country Parks near Cleethorpes. These sites are considered to be avoidable. The Witham Way and Havenside Country Parks located to the west and east of Boston respectively are linear in nature and would need to be considered during routeing.

G.11.34 There is one National Trust holding present within the study area located at Gunby Park, near Spilsby which is considered to be avoidable.

G.11.35 The Lincolnshire coast and north Norfolk coast are popular tourist destinations with a number of coastal resorts and extensive areas of holiday accommodation. It is considered that effects upon the local tourist economy could be minimised through careful routing and design.

Infrastructure Appraisal

G.11.36 There are a number of trunk roads and A roads within the study area including the A16 and A17 which run north-south through the study area. A number of these roads would need to be crossed particularly where they extend across the study area from east to west.

G.11.37 There are several railway lines running within the study area particularly in the area around Grimsby. Further south there is a railway line running south from Skegness to Boston onwards to Sleaford. A number of these railway lines would be unavoidable and would need to be crossed.

G.11.38 The crossing of roads and railways overhead is unlikely to be a major constraint given the required above ground clearance levels of the new 400kV OHL.

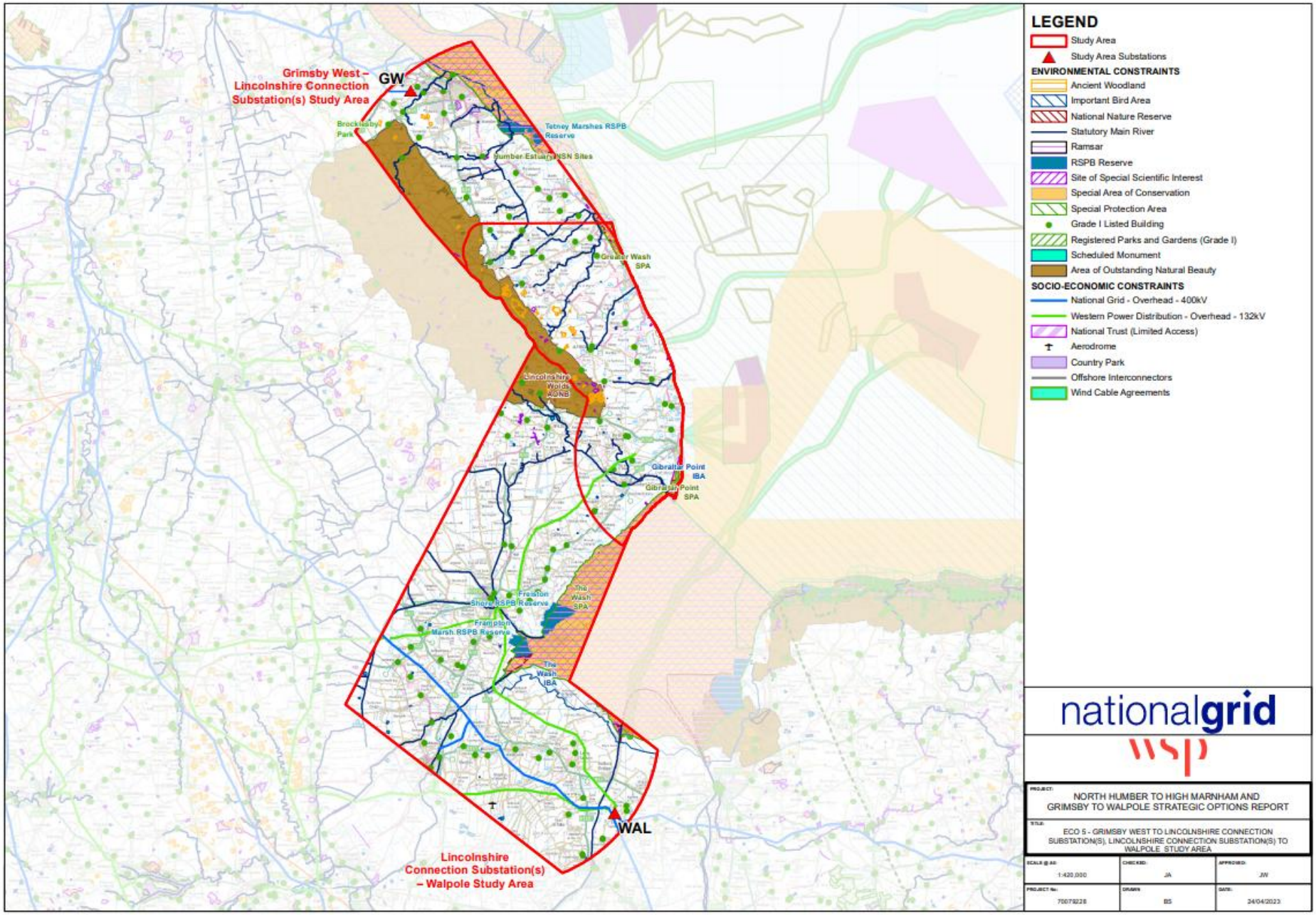
G.11.39 RAF Wainfleet and RAF Holbeach are located on the eastern boundary of the southern portion of the study area. There are also numerous additional airfields within the study area. The RAF bases and airfields would be considered to be avoidable.

G.11.40 There is potential for aircraft flightpaths to cross the study area. The study area is partially within the CAA suggested safeguarding zone for Humberside Airport in the northern portion of the study area and partially within the safeguarding zone for Fenland Aerodrome in the south. All of the study area is located within a Ministry of Defence (MoD) low flying zone, the majority of which is low priority.

G.11.41 Aircraft flightpaths would need to be considered when routeing and siting the pylons. Aviation warning lighting may be required on the pylons.

ECO-5 Summary

G.11.42 Overall, this option is relatively constrained in relation to both ecological, landscape and visual considerations. Whilst Humber Estuary SAC, SPA, Ramsar site and SSSI, The Wash Ramsar Site, SSSI, SPA, IBA and National Nature Reserve, The Wash and North Norfolk Coast IBA and SAC, and Gibraltar Point Ramsar Site and IBA are avoidable there is the potential for adverse effects on the interest features both habitats and species for which a number of these sites are designated. Any project would need to demonstrate that it would not affect the integrity of designated sites. Based on the information available at this stage of the project's development, it is considered that a route could be identified at the routing and siting stage that would not affect the integrity of designated sites (once appropriate mitigation was taken into account). Although the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB would be avoided by the OHL, there is potential for long-term effects on views from the AONB from both the OHL and substation infrastructure at the Lincolnshire Connection Substation(s). There is potential for long term landscape and visual effects due to the introduction of new substation infrastructure, particularly at the Lincolnshire Connection Substation(s) in a landscape which currently has little major development. There would however be opportunities through more detailed assessment to prevent and/or reduce the potential for adverse effects. Other key environmental and socio-economic constraints are considered to be less influential with the potential to mitigate adverse impacts through careful consideration of routeing and siting and the use of appropriate technologies.


Grimsby West – Lincolnshire Connection Substation(s) Study Area
GW
Brocklesby Park
Tetney Marshes RSPB Reserve
Humber Estuary WSN Sites
Greater Wash SPA
Lincolnshire Wolds AONB
Gibraltar Point IBA
Gibraltar Point SPA
Freiston Shore RSPB Reserve
The Wash SPA
Frampton Marsh RSPB Reserve
The Wash IBA
WAL
Lincolnshire Connection Substation(s) – Walpole Study Area
LEGEND
Study Area
Study Area Substations
ENVIRONMENTAL CONSTRAINTS
Ancient Woodland
Important Bird Area
National Nature Reserve
Statutory Main River
Ramsar
RSPB Reserve
Site of Special Scientific Interest
Special Area of Conservation
Special Protection Area
Grade I Listed Building
Registered Parks and Gardens (Grade I)
Scheduled Monument
Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONSTRAINTS
National Grid - Overhead - 400kV
Western Power Distribution - Overhead - 132kV
National Trust (Limited Access)
Aerodrome
Country Park
Offshore Interconnectors
Wind Cable Agreements
nationalgrid
wsp
PROJECT: NORTH HUMBER TO HIGH MARNHAM AND GRIMSBY TO WALPOLE STRATEGIC OPTIONS REPORT
TITLE: ECO 5 - GRIMSBY WEST TO LINCOLNSHIRE CONNECTION SUBSTATION(S), LINCOLNSHIRE CONNECTION SUBSTATION(S) TO WALPOLE STUDY AREA
SCALE @ A0: 1:420,000
CHECKED: JA
APPROVED: JW
PROJECT No: 70079228
DRAWN: BS
DATE: 24/04/2023

ECO-6 – Grimsby West to Lincolnshire Connection Substation(s), Lincolnshire Connection Substation(s) to Weston Marsh substation(s), Weston Marsh substation(s) to Walpole

G.11.43 In order to undertake the environmental and socio-economic appraisal of the ECO-6 option, a study area was established in which the project could reasonably be expected to be developed. The study area encompasses an area approximately 20km wide based on a broad route southwards from Grimsby West to two Lincolnshire Connection Substations (assumed to be located within a broad strategic zone between the Coast and the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB) and onwards to Weston Marsh and Walpole. The appraisal assumes new substation equipment would be required at Grimsby West, two Lincolnshire Connection Substations, Weston Marsh substation(s) and Walpole. Sites and features that might constrain the development of this option are detailed below.

ECO-6 Environmental Appraisal

Landscape and Visual Appraisal

G.11.44 The nature of the landscape of the study area, with the exception of the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB located along the western extent of the northern portion of the study area, is predominantly low-lying flat lands, under intensive agriculture, with smaller areas of gentle relief.

G.11.45 Key sensitive visual receptors within the study area include users of the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB and coastal tourist resorts along the coastline of the study area.

G.11.46 Within the northern portion of the study area the overall landform of the study area is flat and open, and generally rises towards the Lincolnshire Wolds. The predominant land use throughout the study area is arable farmland with little existing infrastructure outside of the road network, settlements, and a few onshore wind farms. The presence of wind farms off the Lincolnshire coast is recognised.

G.11.47 The Lincolnshire Wolds AONB itself would be avoided by the OHL and therefore direct impacts are unlikely, however views from the AONB are likely to be affected by the introduction of the new OHL infrastructure particularly given the low-lying open topography with views from the Wolds to the coast.

G.11.48 The OHL would need to be routed taking into account the pattern of the landscape to avoid settlements, visitor attractions and long-distance open views (particularly from the AONB and high ground) as far as possible.

G.11.49 In the northern portion of the study area there is a potential opportunity to use the landform of the Wolds as a backdrop to reduce visual impact of the OHL, however this would need to be balanced with the need to both avoid the AONB and avoid intruding on views from AONB.

G.11.50 Subject to site selection there may be views of new substation infrastructure at Grimsby West substation from within the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB, however, opportunities exist to develop mitigation. The proximity of the existing Grimsby West substation to the fringes of the existing settlement may increase the potential for visual impacts.

G.11.51 New substation infrastructure at the Lincolnshire Connection Substation(s) would introduce transmission infrastructure in a landscape which currently has little major development. The coastal settlements and the coastal strip are likely to be particularly sensitive. Consideration would need to be given to avoid siting of each of the two Lincolnshire Connection Substations in an open position or in close proximity to the coastline where substation infrastructure is likely to be considered intrusive. There may be potential for views of new Lincolnshire Connection Substation(s) infrastructure from within the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB depending on site selection.

G.11.52 In the southern portion of the study area there is potential for adverse landscape and visual impacts due to the introduction of a new substation(s) at Weston Marsh into a landscape which currently has very little major infrastructure outside the larger settlements.

G.11.53 At the southern end of the study area there is potential for adverse landscape and visual impacts due to the introduction of a new substation at Walpole.

G.11.54 This option is constrained in relation to landscape and visual considerations, with a number of opportunities to avoid constraints and for mitigation through more detailed assessment and siting which would prevent and/or reduce potential for adverse landscape and visual effects.

Historic Environment Appraisal

G.11.55 There are a number of scheduled monuments scattered throughout the study area. It is anticipated that direct impacts on these historic assets can be avoided through careful routeing due to their scattered nature.

G.11.56 A large number of listed buildings have been recorded throughout the study area, with the vast majority being Grade II listed, with fewer Grade I and II* listed buildings. The majority of these are associated with the settlements scattered throughout the study area. These include listed buildings within 1km of the existing Grimsby West substation and Walpole substation. It is likely that listed buildings could be avoided by selecting appropriate route corridors and sensitive routeing and siting.

G.11.57 There are a number of registered parks and gardens within the study area, the largest of which is the Grade I listed Registered Park and Garden of Brocklesby Park. Routeing to the west of Grimsby would need to avoid this registered park and garden.

G.11.58 Whilst designated heritage assets are likely to be avoidable there is the potential for adverse impacts on the setting of such assets depending on the proximity of the OHL and new substation infrastructure.

G.11.59 Physical impacts are likely to be limited to non-designated assets and previously unrecorded assets, although these were not assessed as part of this options appraisal.

G.11.60 Mitigation is expected to be required and could include a phased programme of works including geophysical survey, archaeological evaluation trenching, and archaeological excavation to mitigate physical impacts to non-designated assets / previously unrecorded assets. The design of any above ground infrastructure required, as well as screening/planting, could potentially mitigate impacts on the setting of designated assets where relevant.

Biological Environment Appraisal

G.11.61 The Humber Estuary SAC, SPA, Ramsar site and SSSI are located along the coast in the northern portion of the study area.

G.11.62 The Wash Ramsar Site, SSSI, SPA, IBA and National Nature Reserve, The Wash and North Norfolk Coast IBA and SAC, and Gibraltar Point Ramsar Site and IBA are located along the eastern boundary in the southern portion of the study area.

G.11.63 There are a number of RSPB Reserves within the study area including Tetney Marshes to the south of Cleethorpes and Frampton Marsh to the southeast of Boston.

G.11.64 Whilst these sites are avoidable there is the potential for adverse effects on the interest features both habitats and species for which a number of these sites are designated both during construction and operation. Any project would need to demonstrate that it would not affect the integrity of designated sites. Based on the information available at this stage of the project's development, it is considered that a route could be identified at the routing and siting stage that would not affect the integrity of designated sites (once appropriate mitigation was taken into account).

G.11.65 There are a number of additional SSSIs within the study area although these are smaller scattered sites which could be avoided by through careful routeing. Areas of ancient woodland within the study area are located in the northern and central portions of the study area. It is anticipated that direct impacts on these designated sites can be avoided through careful routeing due to their scattered nature.

Physical Environment Appraisal

G.11.66 Any OHL route between Grimsby West and Walpole would have to cross over several unavoidable watercourses and associated floodplains including the River Witham, the River Welland and the River Nene.

G.11.67 Areas of GSPZ are present within the northern and central portions of the study.

G.11.68 Flood Zones 2 and 3 cover large extents of the study area, in particular south of Skegness where Flood Zones 2 and 3 cover almost the entire extent of the study area. Given the extent of Flood Zones 2 and 3 across the study area, it is likely that a significant amount of development would be located within the floodplain.

G.11.69 Crossings of main rivers, Flood Zone 2 or 3 and GSPZ are expected to be unavoidable. Areas of Flood Zone 2 or 3 are expected to be a constraint for the siting of new substation infrastructure at Walpole, and potentially at the Lincolnshire Connection Substation(s). Standard protection measures would need to be applied during the construction phase and consider the areas of GSPZ and flood risk zones within the study area. Foundations would need to be designed accordingly.

ECO 6 Socio-economic Appraisal

Settlements and Populations Appraisal

G.11.70 There are a number of large urban areas within the study area including Grimsby and Boston as well as numerous smaller towns and settlements scattered throughout. These areas would limit routeing opportunities at several points, particularly to the west and south of Grimsby where the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB is also a constraint.

G.11.71 Temporary adverse impacts associated with noise, air quality and construction traffic during construction could arise if the OHL and substation sites are situated within proximity to settlements. The potential for permanent adverse impacts would be dependent upon the proximity of the substation infrastructure. There is the potential for some adverse visual effects which are set out in the landscape and visual appraisal.

G.11.72 The study area has a large amount of BMV agricultural land considered to be an economic resource. This includes areas of Grade 1 and Grade 2 BMV land particularly southeast of Grimsby and in the southern portion of the study area south of Skegness. Agricultural land would be permanently lost due to the footprint of the pylons and substations at Grimsby West, the Lincolnshire Connection Substation(s), Weston Marsh substation(s) and Walpole.

Tourism and Recreation Appraisal

G.11.73 There are a number of National Cycle Networks (NCN) routes which extend across the study area including the NCN110 south of Grimsby, the Water Way Trail to Boston and NCN1 from Boston towards Wisbech.

G.11.74 There is the potential for temporary adverse effects associated with severance should the NCN routes need to be temporarily closed during construction; however, effects would be temporary.

G.11.75 Standard best practice guidelines should be followed to provide appropriate signage, diversion routes and notice for the users of the NCN routes should part of these routes or trails be closed during construction.

G.11.76 There are four Country Parks within the study area. These include Cleethorpes and Weelsby Woods Country Parks near Cleethorpes. These sites are considered to be avoidable. The Witham Way and Havenside Country Parks located to the west and east of Boston respectively are linear in nature and would need to be considered during routeing.

G.11.77 There is one National Trust holding present within the study area located at Gunby Park, near Spilsby which is considered to be avoidable.

G.11.78 The Lincolnshire coast and north Norfolk coast are popular tourist destinations with a number of coastal resorts and extensive areas of holiday accommodation. It is considered that effects upon the local tourist economy could be minimised through careful routing and design.

Infrastructure Appraisal

G.11.79 There are a number of trunk roads and A roads within the study area including the A16 and A17 which run north-south through the study area. A number of these roads would need to be crossed particularly where they extend across the study area from east to west.

G.11.80 There are several railway lines running within the study area particularly in the area around Grimsby. Further south there is a railway line running south from Skegness to Boston onwards to Sleaford. A number of these railway lines would be unavoidable and would need to be crossed.

G.11.81 The crossing of roads and railways overhead is unlikely to be a major constraint given the required above ground clearance levels of the new 400kV OHL.

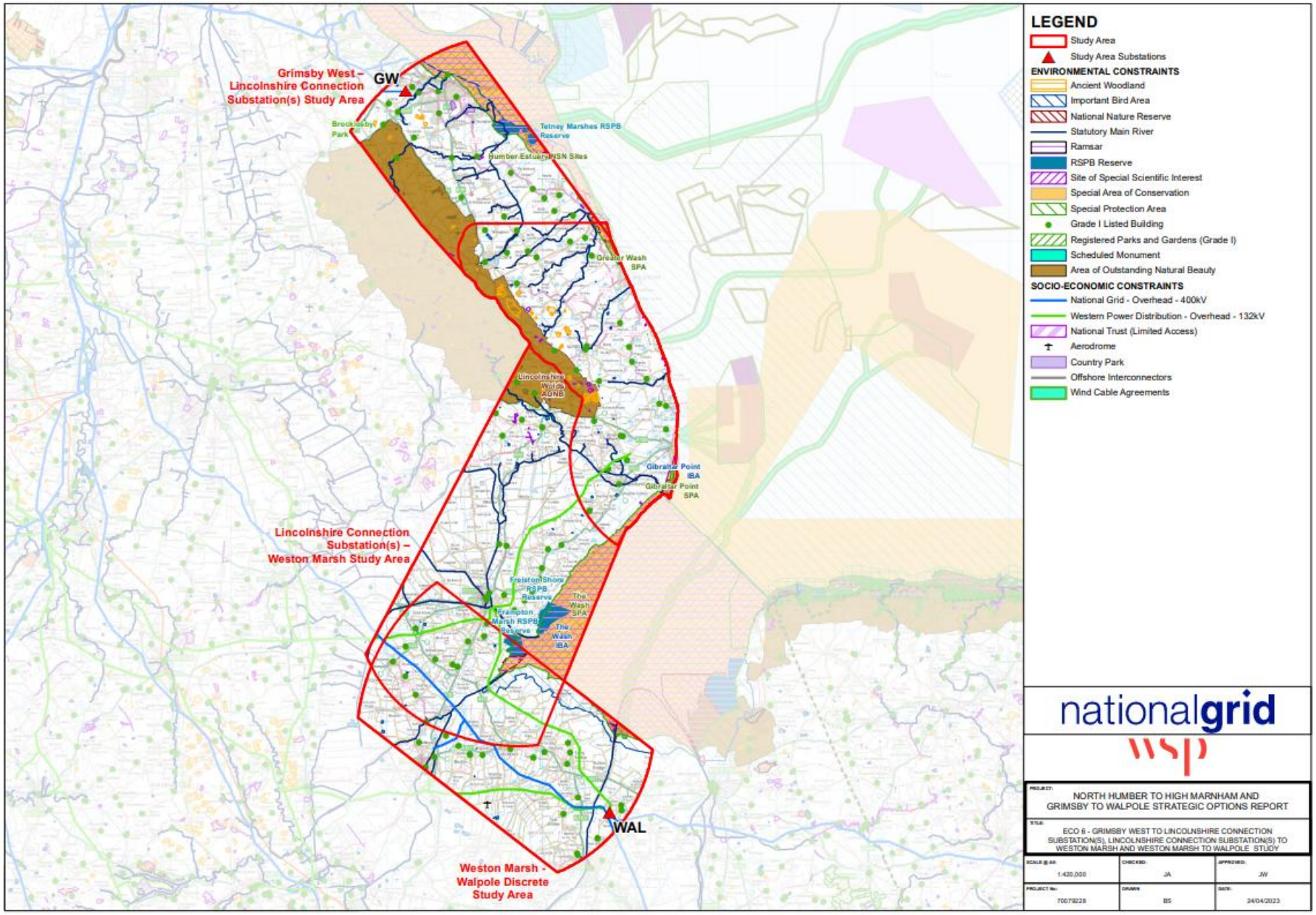
G.11.82 RAF Wainfleet and RAF Holbeach are located on the eastern boundary of the southern portion of the study area. There are also numerous additional airfields within the study area. The RAF bases and airfields would be considered to be avoidable.

G.11.83 There is potential for aircraft flightpaths to cross the study area. The study area is partially within the CAA suggested safeguarding zone for Humberside Airport in the northern portion of the study area and partially within the safeguarding zone for Fenland Aerodrome in the south. All of the study area is located within a Ministry of Defence (MoD) low flying zone, the majority of which is low priority.

G.11.84 Aircraft flightpaths would need to be considered when routeing and siting the pylons. Aviation warning lighting may be required on the pylons.

ECO-6 Summary

G.11.85 Overall, this option is relatively constrained in relation to both ecological, and landscape and visual considerations. Whilst Humber Estuary SAC, SPA, Ramsar site and SSSI, The Wash Ramsar Site, SSSI, SPA, IBA and National Nature Reserve, The Wash and North Norfolk Coast IBA and SAC, and Gibraltar Point Ramsar Site and IBA are avoidable there is the potential for adverse effects on the interest features both habitats and species for which a number of these sites are designated. Any project would need to demonstrate that it would not affect the integrity of designated sites. Based on the information available at this stage of the project's development, it is considered that a route could be identified at the routing and siting stage that would not affect the integrity of designated sites (once appropriate mitigation was taken into account. Although the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB would be avoided by the OHL, there is potential for long-term effects on views from the AONB from both the OHL and substation infrastructure at the Lincolnshire Connection Substation(s). There is potential for long term landscape and visual effects due to the introduction of new substation infrastructure, particularly at the Lincolnshire Connection Substation(s) sites and at Weston Marsh in a landscape which currently has little major development. There would however be opportunities through more detailed assessment to prevent and/or reduce the potential for adverse effects. Other key environmental and socio-economic constraints are considered to be less influential with the potential to mitigate adverse impacts through careful consideration of routeing and siting and the use of appropriate technologies.


Grimsby West – Lincolnshire Connection Substation(s) Study Area
GW
Tetney Marshes RSPB Reserve
Humber Estuary NSN Sites
Greater Wash SPA
Lincolnshire Wolds AONB
Gibraltar Point IBA
Gibraltar Point SPA
Lincolnshire Connection Substation(s) – Weston Marsh Study Area
Frampton Marsh RSPB Reserve
The Wash SPA
The Wash IBA
WAL
Weston Marsh - Walpole Discrete Study Area
LEGEND
Study Area
Study Area Substations
ENVIRONMENTAL CONSTRAINTS
Ancient Woodland
Important Bird Area
National Nature Reserve
Statutory Main River
Ramsar
RSPB Reserve
Site of Special Scientific Interest
Special Area of Conservation
Special Protection Area
Grade I Listed Building
Registered Parks and Gardens (Grade I)
Scheduled Monument
Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONSTRAINTS
National Grid - Overhead - 400kV
Western Power Distribution - Overhead - 132kV
National Trust (Limited Access)
Aerodrome
Country Park
Offshore Interconnectors
Wind Cable Agreements
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ECO 6 - GRIMSBY WEST TO LINCOLNSHIRE CONNECTION SUBSTATION(S), LINCOLNSHIRE CONNECTION SUBSTATION(S) TO WESTON MARSH AND WESTON MARSH TO WALPOLE STUDY
1:420,000
JA
JW
24/04/2023

G.12 ECSS 2 Grimsby West to Walpole Subsea

G.12.1 In order to undertake the environmental and socio-economic appraisal of the ECSS 2 option, a study area was established in which the project could reasonably be expected to be developed. The study area encompasses an area based on a broad route east from Grimsby West to the Lincolnshire coast, then routeing southwards in the marine environment to facilitate landfall on the Norfolk coast, then routeing to Walpole. The appraisal assumes an underground and subsea cable, new converter station equipment at both Grimsby West and Walpole, and an offshore HVDC connection platform. Sites and features that might constrain the development of this option are detailed below. Note, an option to landfall via The Wash was considered to have a high likelihood of causing significant effects on The Wash SPA/SAC sites which form part of the UK's National Site Network, and hence a subsea option via The Wash was discounted.

ECSS 2 – Environmental Appraisal

Northern onshore portion of the study area between Grimsby and the Lincolnshire coast

Landscape and Visual Appraisal

G.12.2 The Lincolnshire Wolds AONB can be avoided as any underground cable routes would be located between the coastline and the Grimsby West area.

G.12.3 Key sensitive visual receptors within the study area include users of the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB and coastal tourist resorts along the coastline of the study area. Subject to site selection there may be views of the Grimsby West converter stations from within the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB, however, opportunities exist to develop mitigation. The proximity of the existing Grimsby West substation to the fringes of the existing settlement may increase the potential for visual impacts.

Historic Environment Appraisal

G.12.4 There are a number of scheduled monuments scattered throughout the study area. It is anticipated that direct impacts on these historic assets can be avoided through careful routeing due to their scattered nature.

G.12.5 A number of listed buildings and one registered parks and gardens are located within the study area. These include listed buildings within 1km of the existing Grimsby West substation. It is expected that listed buildings and the registered parks and garden could be avoided by selecting an appropriate cable route corridor.

G.12.6 Whilst designated heritage assets are likely to be avoidable there is the potential for adverse impacts on the setting of such assets depending on the proximity of the converter station infrastructure at Grimsby West.

G.12.7 Physical impacts are likely to be limited to non-designated assets and previously unrecorded assets, although these have not been assessed as part of this options appraisal.

G.12.8 Mitigation onshore is expected to be required and could include a phased programme of works including geophysical survey, archaeological evaluation

trenching, and archaeological excavation to mitigate physical impacts to non-designated assets / previously unrecorded assets.

Biological Environment Appraisal

G.12.9 Ecological designations occur along the coastline extending to the north of Mablethorpe. These include the Humber Estuary SAC, SPA, Ramsar site and SSSI, Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Dunes and Gibraltar Point SAC and Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Sand Dunes SSSI. A number of these designations may be avoidable depending on landfall selection. The Greater Wash SPA would need to be crossed via the subsea cable.

G.12.10 There is potential for adverse temporary effects on important habitats associated with the designated sites located along the coast.

G.12.11 The potential for a likely significant effect would need to be considered in relation to the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.

G.12.12 There are a number of additional scattered ecological designations within the study area including SSSIs and areas of ancient woodland. It is anticipated that direct impacts on these designations can be avoided through careful routeing due to their scattered nature.

Physical Environment Appraisal

G.12.13 The onshore cable would have to cross over several unavoidable watercourses and associated floodplains. Areas of GSPZ are present. Flood Zones 2 and 3 cover the coastal extents of the study area.

G.12.14 Crossings of main rivers, Flood Zone 2 or 3 and GSPZ are expected to be unavoidable. Areas of Flood Zone 2 or 3 are expected to be a constraint for the siting of new converter station infrastructure at Walpole. Standard protection measures would need to be applied during the construction phase and consider the areas of GSPZ and flood risk zones within the study area. Foundations would need to be designed accordingly.

Southern onshore portion of the study area between the Norfolk coast and Walpole.

G.12.15 The environmental appraisal for the southern portion of the onshore study area for ECSS 2 between the Norfolk coast and Walpole would be as for the southern portion of the onshore study area for ECSS 1 (Norfolk).

ECSS 2 Socio-economic Appraisal

Northern onshore portion of the study area between Grimsby and the Lincolnshire coast

Settlements and Populations Appraisal

G.12.16 The large urban area of Grimsby would present a constraint for cable routeing. There are also numerous towns and smaller settlements scattered throughout the study area which limit routeing opportunities at several points. A key characteristic of a number of the coastal settlements is that they tend to have a linear pattern and

extend along the coast as opposed to extending inland. This increases the built development fronting onto the coastline and in a number of areas would limit opportunities for cable landfall.

G.12.17 Temporary adverse impacts associated with noise, air quality and construction traffic during construction could arise if the cable route and converter station sites are situated within proximity to settlements. The potential for permanent adverse impacts would be dependent upon the proximity of the converter station infrastructure. There is the potential for some adverse visual effects which are set out in the landscape and visual appraisal.

G.12.18 Grade 3 BMV agricultural land is the most prominent land type classification within the study area. Smaller areas of Grade 1 and 2 BMV occur including southeast of Grimsby Temporary effects on agricultural land would occur during the cable construction phase. Standard best practice guidelines should be followed to reinstate agricultural land following construction. Agricultural land would be permanently lost due to the footprint of the converter stations at Grimsby West.

Tourism and Recreation Appraisal

G.12.19 There are a number of NCN routes within the study area including the NCN110 south of Grimsby which extends across the study area. There is the potential for temporary adverse effects associated with severance should this NCN route need to be temporarily closed during construction; however, effects would be temporary.

G.12.20 There are two Country Parks within the study area: Cleethorpes and Weelsby Woods Country Parks near Cleethorpes. These sites are considered to be avoidable.

G.12.21 The Lincolnshire coast is a popular tourist destination with a number of coastal resorts and extensive areas of holiday accommodation. It is considered that effects upon the local tourist economy could be minimised through careful routing and design.

Infrastructure Appraisal

G.12.22 The road network within the study area includes a number of A roads including the A46, A16 and A18 which may need to be crossed.

G.12.23 RAF Donna Nook and Theddlethorpe Range MOD Establishment are located on the eastern boundary of the study area. The RAF and MOD bases and would need to be considered when routeing the cable.

G.12.24 There is potential for aircraft flightpaths to cross the study area. The northern portion of the study area is partially within the CAA suggested safeguarding zone for Humberside Airport. All of the study area is located within a MoD low flying zone, the majority of which is low priority, with an area of high priority in the vicinity of RAF Donna Nook. The low flying zone is not considered to be a constraint to routeing due to the underground nature of the cable. Aircraft flightpaths should be considered when siting the converter stations.

Southern onshore portion of the study area between the Norfolk coast and Walpole.

G.12.25 The socio-economic appraisal for the southern portion of the onshore study area for ECSS 2 between the Norfolk coast and Walpole would be as for the southern portion of the onshore study area for ECSS 1 (Norfolk).

G.12.26 The Humber Estuary SAC, SPA, Ramsar site and SSSI, Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Dunes and Gibraltar Point SAC and Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Sand Dunes SSSI extend into the northern section of the marine study area along the Lincolnshire coastline however these designated sites are potentially avoidable depending on landfall selection and subsea cable installation methods.

G.12.27 The Inner Dowsing, Race Bank and North Ridge SAC extends across the majority of the study area; this site could potentially be avoided depending on subsea cable routeing and offshore HVDC connection platform siting.

G.12.28 The Greater Wash SPA, which is designated for both breeding and non-breeding bird interests, falls with the study area at the coastal locations at both the north and south of the study area and would be unavoidable.

G.12.29 Appropriate routeing and siting and mitigation would need to be considered to avoid likely significant effects. The potential for a likely significant effect would need to be considered in relation to the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.

G.12.30 In the southern section of the study area along and off the north Norfolk coast are further marine designated sites including Cromer Shoal Chalk Beds MCZ, Holkham National Nature Reserve, Blakeney National Nature Reserve, North Norfolk Coast RAMSAR site, North Norfolk Coast SSSI, North Norfolk Coast IBA, and The Wash and North Norfolk Coast SAC.

G.12.31 The majority of the remainder of these designated areas are likely to be avoidable when considered in isolation; however due to the number and proximity of the designated sites along the north Norfolk coast – including Cromer Shoal Chalk Beds MCZ, The Wash and North Norfolk Coast SAC, Holkham National Nature Reserve, Blakeney National Nature Reserve and North Norfolk Coast RAMSAR, SSSI and IBA - it would not be possible to avoid all of these designated areas, therefore careful routeing would need to be considered. The North Norfolk Coast SSSI, which supports nationally and internationally important numbers of various species of breeding or wintering waterbirds, covers the majority of the study area along the north Norfolk coast, therefore whilst avoiding it would be possible, to do so would limit options of cable routes and landfall locations.

G.12.32 Within the study area other marine infrastructure is present including, Triton Knoll offshore wind farm, Race Bank offshore wind farm, Inner Dowsing offshore wind farm, Lincs offshore wind farm, Sheringham Shoal offshore wind farm (and the proposed Sheringham Shoal Extension to the north and the east of the existing wind farm), the proposed Dudgeon Extension, cable routes associated with Race Bank and Triton Knoll, and Hornsea One, Two and Three offshore wind farms, the Viking Link marine cable route and various pipelines and oil and gas infrastructure. Whilst the offshore wind farms are avoidable, it is unlikely that crossings of cables and pipelines could be avoided entirely, including the Triton Knoll and Hornsea One and Two offshore wind farm cable routes and the Viking Link marine cable route.

G.12.33 There are a number of marine aggregate dredging areas within the study area; these are mainly concentrated off the coast at Mablethorpe and south of the Triton Knoll offshore wind farm, all of which would influence cable routeing within the study area.

G.12.34 Shipping and navigation constraints may influence subsea cable routeing within the study area. The study area carries a moderate amount of traffic with several important commercial shipping routes to/from UK ports, particularly passenger

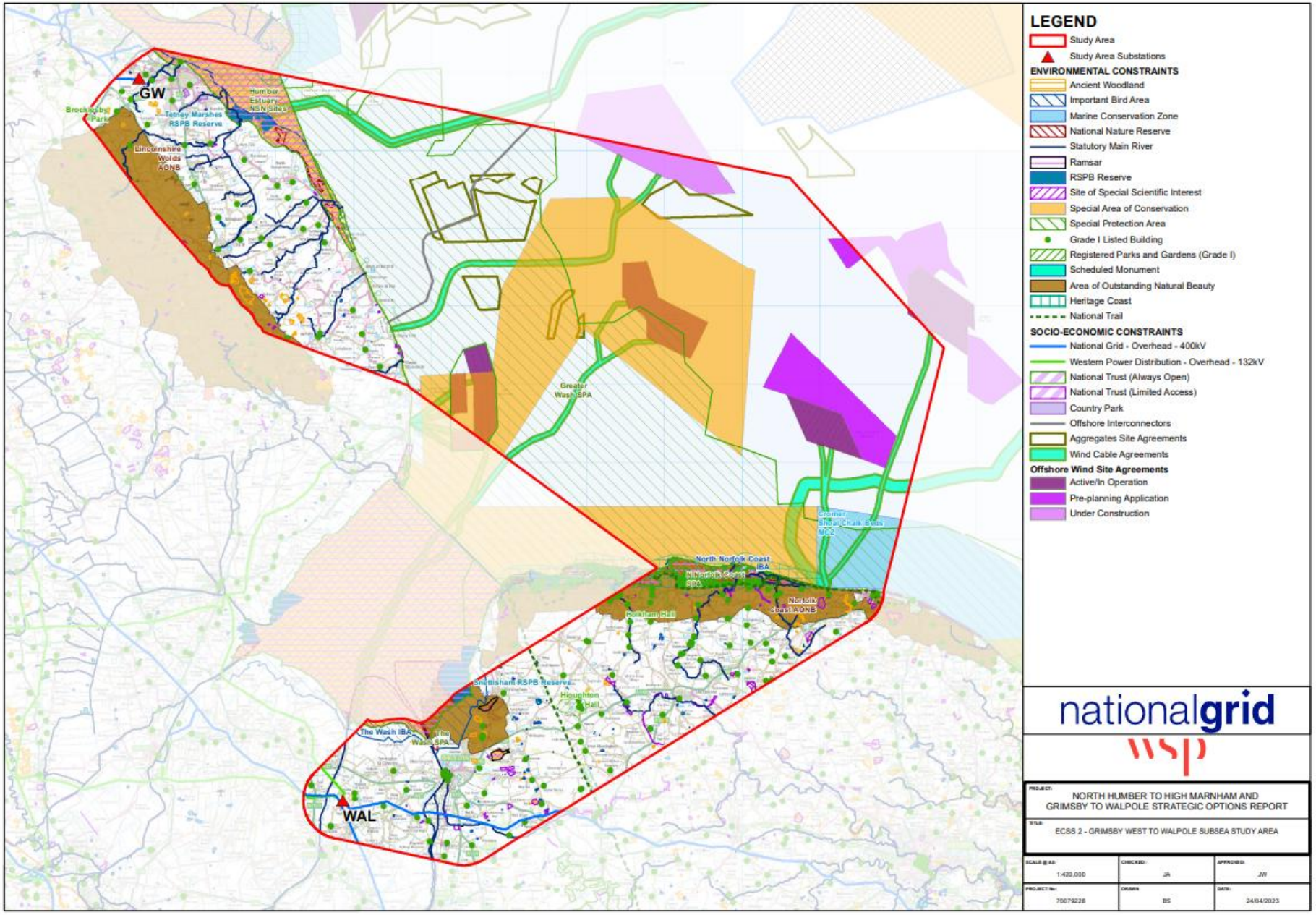
vessels, oil and gas support vessels and cargo ships. In particular there are anchorages and traffic separation zones around the mouth of the Humber which coincide with vessel movements to/out of the Humber associated with access to various ports and harbours. Commercial shipping routes also exist to ports within The Wash including the Port of Boston.

G.12.35 The MoD Donna Nook Military Practice and Exercise Area (PEXA) which extends along the coast south of Northcotes Point to north of Theddlethorpe St Helens and out into inshore waters for approximately 15 km is within the study area.

G.12.36 There are a number of sandbanks, sandbank systems and other notable seabed features within the study area which may pose engineering challenges.

ECSS 2 Summary

G.12.37 Overall, this option is constrained in relation to ecological considerations. The Greater Wash SPA is unavoidable and would require cable crossings. Due to the number and proximity of designated sites along the north Norfolk coast including Cromer Shoal Chalk Beds MCZ, The Wash and North Norfolk Coast SAC, Holkham National Nature Reserve, and North Norfolk Coast Ramsar, SSSI and IBA it would not be possible to avoid all of these designated areas. It may be possible to avoid ecologically designated sites associated with the Humber Estuary, Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Dunes and Gibraltar Point along the Lincolnshire coast depending on landfall siting. The potential for likely significant effects on designated sites would need to be considered in relation to the Habitats Directive. There are potential heritage constraints which may result in potential effects on the setting of a number of Scheduled Monuments and listed buildings depending on converter station siting at Grimsby West. Other key environmental and socio-economic constraints are considered to be less influential with the potential to mitigate adverse impacts through careful consideration of routeing and siting and the use of appropriate technologies.


GW
WAL
Humber Estuary NSN Sites
Tetney Marshes RSPB Reserve
Lincolnshire Wolds AONB
Greater Wash SPA
North Norfolk Coast IBA
North Norfolk Coast SPA
Norfolk Coast AONB
Holkham Hall
Snettisham RSPB Reserve
Houghton Hall
The Wash IBA
The Wash SPA
LEGEND
Study Area
Study Area Substations
ENVIRONMENTAL CONSTRAINTS
Ancient Woodland
Important Bird Area
Marine Conservation Zone
National Nature Reserve
Statutory Main River
Ramsar
RSPB Reserve
Site of Special Scientific Interest
Special Area of Conservation
Special Protection Area
Grade I Listed Building
Registered Parks and Gardens (Grade I)
Scheduled Monument
Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
Heritage Coast
National Trail
SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONSTRAINTS
National Grid - Overhead - 400kV
Western Power Distribution - Overhead - 132kV
National Trust (Always Open)
National Trust (Limited Access)
Country Park
Offshore Interconnectors
Aggregates Site Agreements
Wind Cable Agreements
Offshore Wind Site Agreements
Active/In Operation
Pre-planning Application
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G.13 Environmental and Socio-economic Appraisal Summary Table

G.13.1 Table G.1 below presents a summary of the key differentiators across the strategic options. The table excludes the eastern sub-options for ECO-1, ECO-2, ECO-3 and ECO-4 all of which would involve a tunnel across the Humber, and which on balance when considered against environment, socio-economic, technology and cost, were not preferred over the western sub-options.

Table G.1 – Options providing 6GW increase to B8 and Generation connections to Creyke Beck by 2031

	ECO-1 (West) **Creyke Beck to High Marnham**	**ECO-2 (West)** **Creyke Beck to Cottam**	**ECO-3 (West)** **Creyke Beck to Grimsby West, Grimsby West to Walpole**	**ECO-4 (West)** **Creyke Beck to Grimsby West, Grimsby West to Weston Marsh substation(s)**	**ECSS 1 (Norfolk)** **Creyke Beck to Walpole Subsea (Norfolk Coast)**	**ECSS 1 (Lincs)** **Creyke Beck to Walpole Subsea (Lincs Coast)**
Assumptions	Full OHL option. Creyke Beck and High Marnham substations delivered by others.	Full OHL option. Creyke Beck and Cottam substations delivered by others. Sealing End Compound at Cottam.	Full OHL option. Creyke Beck substation delivered by others. New Grimsby West substation. New Walpole B substation.	Full OHL option. Creyke Beck substation delivered by others. New Grimsby West substation. Weston Marsh substation(s).	Underground/subsea cable. 3 converter stations at Creyke Beck. 3 converters stations at Walpole. Norfolk landfall.	Underground/subsea cable. 3 converter stations at Creyke Beck. 3 converter stations at Walpole. Lincs landfall.
Approx. corridor length	85km	75km	180km	160km	250km	190km
ENVIRONMENTAL						
Biological	OHL will cross the Humber Estuary SPA, SAC, Ramsar and SSSI with potential for direct effects on breeding, over-wintering and passage	The OHL will cross the Humber Estuary SPA, SAC, Ramsar and SSSI with potential for direct effects on breeding, over-wintering	The OHL will cross the Humber Estuary SPA, SAC, Ramsar and SSSI with potential for direct effects on breeding, over-wintering and passage bird	The OHL will cross the Humber Estuary SPA, SAC, Ramsar and SSSI with potential for direct effects on breeding, over-wintering and passage bird species (collision risk). Paralleling the	Direct effects on the Greater Wash SPA and Holderness Inshore MCZ both of which are within the study area and would require a cable crossing. It is acknowledged that the study area could	Direct effects on the Greater Wash SPA and Holderness Inshore MCZ both of which are within the study area and would require a cable crossing. It is acknowledged that the study area could

	ECO-1 (West) Creyke Beck to High Marnham	ECO-2 (West) Creyke Beck to Cottam	ECO-3 (West) Creyke Beck to Grimsby West, Grimsby West to Walpole	ECO-4 (West) Creyke Beck to Grimsby West, Grimsby West to Weston Marsh substation(s)	ECSS 1 (Norfolk) Creyke Beck to Walpole Subsea (Norfolk Coast)	ECSS 1 (Lincs) Creyke Beck to Walpole Subsea (Lincs Coast)
	bird species (collision risk). Paralleling the existing 4ZQ 400kV OHL route to the west of Kingston-Upon-Hull and south over the River Ouse would potentially reduce impacts on protected species, including potential bird strikes.	and passage bird species (collision risk). Paralleling the existing 4ZQ 400kV OHL route to the west of Kingston-Upon-Hull and south over the River Ouse would potentially reduce impacts on protected species, including potential bird strikes.	species (collision risk). Paralleling the existing 4ZQ 400kV OHL route to the west of Kingston-Upon-Hull and south over the River Ouse would potentially reduce impacts on protected species, including potential bird strikes.	existing 4ZQ 400kV OHL route to the west of Kingston-Upon-Hull and south over the River Ouse would potentially reduce impacts on protected species, including potential bird strikes.	be extended further north to avoid a crossing of the Holderness MCZ however this would extend the overall cable length and potentially require a crossing of the Holderness Offshore MCZ or the Southern North Sea Special SAC.	be extended further north to avoid a crossing of the Holderness MCZ however this would extend the overall cable length and potentially require a crossing of the Holderness Offshore MCZ.
	Whilst Thorne and Hatfield Moors SPA and IBA, Thorne Moor SAC, Hatfield Moor SAC, Hatfield Moors	Whilst Thorne and Hatfield Moors SPA and IBA, Thorne Moor SAC, Hatfield Moor SAC, Hatfield Moors SSSI,	Whilst The Wash Ramsar Site, SSSI, SPA, IBA and National Nature Reserve, The Wash and North Norfolk Coast IBA and	Whilst The Wash Ramsar Site, SSSI, SPA, IBA and National Nature Reserve, The Wash and North Norfolk Coast IBA and SAC, and Gibraltar Point	Potential for direct effects on designated sites along the north Norfolk coast including Cromer Shoal Chalk Beds MCZ, The Wash and	Potential for effects on designated sites along the Lincolnshire coast including Humber Estuary SAC, SPA, Ramsar site and SSSI, Saltfleetby-

	ECO-1 (West) Creyke Beck to High Marnham	ECO-2 (West) Creyke Beck to Cottam	ECO-3 (West) Creyke Beck to Grimsby West, Grimsby West to Walpole	ECO-4 (West) Creyke Beck to Grimsby West, Grimsby West to Weston Marsh substation(s)	ECSS 1 (Norfolk) Creyke Beck to Walpole Subsea (Norfolk Coast)	ECSS 1 (Lincs) Creyke Beck to Walpole Subsea (Lincs Coast)
	SSSI, Thorne, Crowle and Goole Moors SSSI, and Laughton Forest IBA are avoidable there is the potential for adverse effects on the interest features (habitats and species) for which a number of these sites are depending on routeing.	Thorne, Crowle and Goole Moors SSSI, and Laughton Forest IBA are avoidable there is the potential for adverse effects on the interest features (habitats and species) for which a number of these sites are depending on routeing	SAC, and Gibraltar Point Ramsar Site and IBA are avoidable there is the potential for adverse effects on the interest features both habitats and species for which a number of these sites are designated.	Ramsar Site and IBA are avoidable there is the potential for adverse effects on the interest features both habitats and species for which a number of these sites are designated.	North Norfolk Coast SAC, Holkham National Nature Reserve, and North Norfolk Coast RAMSAR, SSSI and IBA; it would not be possible to avoid all designated areas.	Theddlethorpe Dunes and Gibraltar Point SAC and Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Sand Dunes SSSI at the landfall depending on routeing.
	There are a number of additional SSSIs within the study area including Scotton and Laughton Forest Ponds	There are a number of additional SSSIs within the study area including Scotton and Laughton Forest Ponds	There are a number of additional SSSIs within the study area although these are smaller scattered sites which could be avoided by	There are a number of additional SSSIs within the study area although these are smaller scattered sites which could be avoided by through careful routeing. Areas of ancient	Potential for effects on additional designated ecological sites including River Nar SSSI depending on onshore cable routeing.	There are a number of additional SSSIs including Chapel Point to Wolla Bank SSSI and areas of ancient woodland within the study area although these are smaller scattered

	ECO-1 (West) Creyke Beck to High Marnham	ECO-2 (West) Creyke Beck to Cottam	ECO-3 (West) Creyke Beck to Grimsby West, Grimsby West to Walpole	ECO-4 (West) Creyke Beck to Grimsby West, Grimsby West to Weston Marsh substation(s)	ECSS 1 (Norfolk) Creyke Beck to Walpole Subsea (Norfolk Coast)	ECSS 1 (Lincs) Creyke Beck to Walpole Subsea (Lincs Coast)
	SSSI, Laughton SSSI, Risby Warren SSSI, as well as a number located along linear features such as ditches and canals. There are several areas of ancient woodland scattered throughout the study area. It is anticipated that direct impacts on these designated assets could be avoided through careful routeing due to their	SSSI, Laughton SSSI, Risby Warren SSSI, as well as a number along linear features such as ditches and canals. There are several areas of ancient woodland scattered throughout the study area. It is anticipated that direct impacts on these designated assets could be avoided through careful routeing due to their scattered nature.	through careful routeing. Areas of ancient woodland within the study area are mainly located in the northern and central portions of the study area. It is anticipated that direct impacts on these designated sites could be avoided through careful routeing due to their scattered nature.	woodland within the study area are mainly located in the northern and central portions of the study area. It is anticipated that direct impacts on these designated sites could be avoided through careful routeing due to their scattered nature.		sites which could be avoided by through careful routeing.

	ECO-1 (West) Creyke Beck to High Marnham	ECO-2 (West) Creyke Beck to Cottam	ECO-3 (West) Creyke Beck to Grimsby West, Grimsby West to Walpole	ECO-4 (West) Creyke Beck to Grimsby West, Grimsby West to Weston Marsh substation(s)	ECSS 1 (Norfolk) Creyke Beck to Walpole Subsea (Norfolk Coast)	ECSS 1 (Lincs) Creyke Beck to Walpole Subsea (Lincs Coast)
	scattered nature.					
Landscape & Visual	Potential long-term landscape and visual effects on the Yorkshire Wolds Important Landscape Area. Potential for adverse visual effects on users of the Yorkshire Wolds National Trail. Potential effects on visual amenity for residents along affected settlement edges and at scattered properties.	Potential long-term landscape and visual effects on the Yorkshire Wolds Important Landscape Area. Potential for adverse visual effects on users of the Yorkshire Wolds National Trail. Potential effects on visual amenity for residents along affected settlement edges and at scattered properties.	Potential long-term landscape and visual effects on the Yorkshire Wolds Important Landscape Area. Potential for adverse visual effects on users of the Yorkshire Wolds National Trail. The Lincolnshire Wolds AONB itself would be avoided by the OHL, however there is potential for long-term effects on views from the AONB particularly given the low-lying open topography with views from	Potential long-term landscape and visual effects on the Yorkshire Wolds Important Landscape Area. Potential for adverse visual effects on users of the Yorkshire Wolds National Trail. The Lincolnshire Wolds AONB itself would be avoided by the OHL, however there is potential for long-term effects on views from the AONB particularly given the low-lying open topography with views from the Wolds to the coast. Potential for long term landscape and visual effects due to the introduction of	Temporary landscape and visual effects, including impacts on the landscape of the Norfolk Coast AONB which could not be avoided. Views within and from both the AONB and North Norfolk Heritage Coast may be temporary period during construction. Potential for temporary adverse visual effects on users of the Peddar's Way and Norfolk Coast Path National Trail. Potential for adverse residual permanent effects during the operational phase of the converter	The Lincolnshire Wolds AONB itself would be expected to be avoided. . Potential for adverse residual permanent effects during the operational phase of the converter stations at Creyke Beck and Walpole.

	ECO-1 (West) Creyke Beck to High Marnham	ECO-2 (West) Creyke Beck to Cottam	ECO-3 (West) Creyke Beck to Grimsby West, Grimsby West to Walpole	ECO-4 (West) Creyke Beck to Grimsby West, Grimsby West to Weston Marsh substation(s)	ECSS 1 (Norfolk) Creyke Beck to Walpole Subsea (Norfolk Coast)	ECSS 1 (Lincs) Creyke Beck to Walpole Subsea (Lincs Coast)
			the Wolds to the coast. Potential for adverse landscape and visual impacts due to the introduction of a new substation at Walpole. Potential effects on visual amenity for residents along affected settlement edges and at scattered properties.	new substation infrastructure at Weston Marsh in a landscape which currently has little major development. Potential effects on visual amenity for residents along affected settlement edges and at scattered properties	stations at Creyke Beck and Walpole.	
Historic Environment	Potential effects on the setting of a number of Scheduled Monuments and listed buildings dependent on routeing.	Potential effects on the setting of a number of Scheduled Monuments and listed buildings dependent on routeing.	Potential effects on the setting of a number of Scheduled Monuments and listed buildings dependent on routeing and siting. Potential effects on the setting of	Potential effects on the setting of a number of Scheduled Monuments and listed buildings dependent on routeing and siting. Potential effects on the setting of Brocklesby Park	Potential effects on the setting of a number of Scheduled Monuments and listed buildings dependent on converter station siting especially in the Creyke Beck area.	Potential effects on the setting of a number of Scheduled Monuments and listed buildings dependent on converter station siting especially in the Creyke Beck area.

	ECO-1 (West) Creyke Beck to High Marnham	ECO-2 (West) Creyke Beck to Cottam	ECO-3 (West) Creyke Beck to Grimsby West, Grimsby West to Walpole	ECO-4 (West) Creyke Beck to Grimsby West, Grimsby West to Weston Marsh substation(s)	ECSS 1 (Norfolk) Creyke Beck to Walpole Subsea (Norfolk Coast)	ECSS 1 (Lincs) Creyke Beck to Walpole Subsea (Lincs Coast)
		Potential effects on the setting of Scheduled Monuments and listed buildings depending on the proximity of the new Sealing End Compound infrastructure required at Cottam.	Brocklesby Park Registered Park and Garden.	Registered Park and Garden.		
Physical	Crossings of main rivers (including the River Ouse), Flood Zone 2 and 3 and GSPZ are expected to be unavoidable.	Crossings of main rivers (including the River Ouse), Flood Zone 2 and 3 and GSPZ are expected to be unavoidable.	Crossings of main rivers (including the River Ancholme, the River Witham, the River Welland and the River Nene). Flood Zone 2 and 3 and GSPZ are expected to be unavoidable. Areas of Flood Zone 2 or 3 are expected to be	Crossings of main rivers (including the River Ouse, the River Ancholme, the River Witham and the River Welland). Flood Zone 2 and 3 and GSPZ are expected to be unavoidable. Areas of Flood Zone 2 or 3 are expected to be unavoidable for the siting of new	The onshore cable would have to cross over several unavoidable watercourses including main rivers and associated floodplains including the River Hull as well as a large number of drainage ditches. Areas of Flood Zone 2 or 3 are expected to be unavoidable for	The onshore cable would have to cross over several unavoidable watercourses including main rivers and associated floodplains including the Steeping River, the River Witham, the River Welland and the River Nene, as well as a large number of drainage

	ECO-1 (West) Creyke Beck to High Marnham	ECO-2 (West) Creyke Beck to Cottam	ECO-3 (West) Creyke Beck to Grimsby West, Grimsby West to Walpole	ECO-4 (West) Creyke Beck to Grimsby West, Grimsby West to Weston Marsh substation(s)	ECSS 1 (Norfolk) Creyke Beck to Walpole Subsea (Norfolk Coast)	ECSS 1 (Lincs) Creyke Beck to Walpole Subsea (Lincs Coast)
			unavoidable for the siting of new substation infrastructure at Walpole.	substation infrastructure at Weston Marsh.	the siting of converter station infrastructure at Walpole.	ditches. Areas of Flood Zone 2 or 3 are expected to be unavoidable for the siting of converter station infrastructure at Walpole.
SOCIO-ECONOMIC						
Settlements and Population	Numerous large urban areas within the study area including Kingston-Upon-Hull, Scunthorpe and Gainsborough as well as numerous smaller settlements scattered throughout.	Numerous large urban areas within the study area including Kingston-Upon-Hull, Scunthorpe and Gainsborough together with numerous smaller settlements scattered throughout.	Numerous large urban areas within the study area including Scunthorpe, Immingham, Grimsby and Boston as well as numerous smaller towns and settlements scattered throughout. These areas would limit routeing opportunities at several points, particularly to the west and south of Grimsby where	Numerous large urban areas within the study area including Scunthorpe, Immingham, Grimsby and Boston as well as numerous smaller towns and settlements scattered throughout. These areas would limit routeing opportunities at several points, particularly to the west and south of Grimsby where the Lincolnshire Wolds	The large urban areas of Kingston-Upon-Hull and Kings Lynn as well as numerous smaller towns and settlements scattered throughout the study area present a constraint for routeing of an underground cable.	The large urban areas of Kingston-Upon-Hull and Boston as well as numerous smaller towns and settlements scattered throughout the study area present a constraint for routeing of an underground cable.

	ECO-1 (West) Creyke Beck to High Marnham	ECO-2 (West) Creyke Beck to Cottam	ECO-3 (West) Creyke Beck to Grimsby West, Grimsby West to Walpole	ECO-4 (West) Creyke Beck to Grimsby West, Grimsby West to Weston Marsh substation(s)	ECSS 1 (Norfolk) Creyke Beck to Walpole Subsea (Norfolk Coast)	ECSS 1 (Lincs) Creyke Beck to Walpole Subsea (Lincs Coast)
			the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB is also a constraint.	AONB is also a constraint.		
Tourism and Recreation	The Yorkshire Wolds National Trail and Trans Pennine Trail NCN cross the northern portion of the study area. A number of other NCNs cross the study area.	The Yorkshire Wolds National Trail and Trans Pennine Trail NCN cross the northern portion of the study area. A number of other NCNs cross the study area.	The Yorkshire Wolds National Trail and Trans Pennine Trail NCN cross the northern portion of the study area. A number of other NCNs cross the study area. The Witham Way and Havenside Country Parks located to the west and east of Boston respectively are linear in nature and would need to be considered during routeing. The Lincolnshire coast and north Norfolk coast are popular tourist	The Yorkshire Wolds National Trail and Trans Pennine Trail NCN cross the northern portion of the study area. A number of other NCNs cross the study area. The Witham Way and Havenside Country Parks located to the west and east of Boston respectively are linear in nature and would need to be considered during routeing. The Lincolnshire coast and north Norfolk coast are popular tourist destinations with a number of coastal resorts and extensive areas of	The Trans Pennine Trail NCN extends across the northern portion of the study area. A number of other NCNs cross the study area including routes to/from Kings Lynn. The Lincolnshire coast and north Norfolk coast are popular tourist destinations with a number of coastal resorts and extensive areas of holiday accommodation. It is considered that effects upon the local tourist economy could be minimised through	The Trans Pennine Trail NCN extends across the northern portion of the study area. A number of other NCNs cross the study area. The Witham Way and Havenside Country Parks located to the west and east of Boston respectively are linear in nature and would need to be considered during routeing. The Lincolnshire coast and north Norfolk coast are popular tourist destinations with a number of coastal resorts and extensive areas of holiday accommodation. It is

	ECO-1 (West) Creyke Beck to High Marnham	ECO-2 (West) Creyke Beck to Cottam	ECO-3 (West) Creyke Beck to Grimsby West, Grimsby West to Walpole	ECO-4 (West) Creyke Beck to Grimsby West, Grimsby West to Weston Marsh substation(s)	ECSS 1 (Norfolk) Creyke Beck to Walpole Subsea (Norfolk Coast)	ECSS 1 (Lincs) Creyke Beck to Walpole Subsea (Lincs Coast)
			destinations with a number of coastal resorts and extensive areas of holiday accommodation. It is considered that effects upon the local tourist economy could be minimised through careful routing and design.	holiday accommodation. It is considered that effects upon the local tourist economy could be minimised through careful routing and design.	careful routing and design.	considered that effects upon the local tourist economy could be minimised through careful routing and design.
Infrastructure	Both the M180 and M62/A63 would need to be crossed. A number of trunk roads would also need to be crossed where they extend across the study area from east to west. Several railway lines	Both the M180 and M62/A63 would need to be crossed. A number of trunk roads would also need to be crossed where they extend across the study area from east to west. Several railway lines would	Both the M180/A180 and M62/A63 would need to be crossed. There are also a number of trunk roads and A roads within the study area including the A16 and A17 which run north-south through the central and southern portions	Both the M180/A180 and M62/A63 would need to be crossed. There are also a number of trunk roads and A roads within the study area including the A16 and A17 which run north-south through the central and southern portions of the study area. A number of these roads would need to	Numerous marine infrastructure present including offshore wind farms, offshore cable routes and various pipelines and oil and gas infrastructure; it is unlikely that crossings of cables and pipelines could be avoided entirely. There are a number of marine aggregate dredging areas and	Numerous marine infrastructure present including offshore wind farms, offshore cable routes and various pipelines and oil and gas infrastructure; it is unlikely that crossings of cables and pipelines could be avoided entirely. There are a number of marine aggregate dredging areas and

	ECO-1 (West) Creyke Beck to High Marnham	ECO-2 (West) Creyke Beck to Cottam	ECO-3 (West) Creyke Beck to Grimsby West, Grimsby West to Walpole	ECO-4 (West) Creyke Beck to Grimsby West, Grimsby West to Weston Marsh substation(s)	ECSS 1 (Norfolk) Creyke Beck to Walpole Subsea (Norfolk Coast)	ECSS 1 (Lincs) Creyke Beck to Walpole Subsea (Lincs Coast)
	would need to be crossed.	need to be crossed.	of the study area. A number of these roads would need to be crossed particularly where they extend across the study area from east to west. Several railway lines would need to be crossed.	be crossed particularly where they extend across the study area from east to west. Several railway lines would need to be crossed.	shipping and navigation constraints which would need to be considered as part of subsea cable routeing. Onshore road and rail crossings required.	shipping and navigation constraints which would need to be considered as part of subsea cable routeing. Onshore road and rail crossings required.

Table G.2 – Options providing additional 6GW increase to B8, 6GW capacity to B9 and Generation connections to Coastal Connection Substation by 2033

	ECO-5 Grimsby West to Lincolnshire Connection Substation(s), Lincolnshire Connection Substation(s) to Walpole	ECO-6 Grimsby West to Lincolnshire Connection Substation(s), Lincolnshire Connection Substation(s) Weston Marsh substation(s), Weston Marsh substation(s) to Walpole	ECSS 2 Grimsby West to Walpole Subsea
Assumptions	Full OHL option. New substation at Grimsby West. New substation at Walpole. 2 Lincolnshire Connection substations.	Full OHL option. New substation at Grimsby West. Substation(s) at Weston Marsh. New substation at Walpole 2 Lincolnshire Connection substations.	Underground/subsea cable. 3 converter stations at Grimsby West. 3 converter stations at Walpole. Norfolk coast landfall. Offshore AC/HVDC platform(s).
Approx. corridor length	120km	120km	200km
ENVIRONMENTAL			
Biological	Whilst The Humber and The Wash designated sites are avoidable there is the potential for adverse effects on the interest features both habitats and species for which a number of these sites are designated.	Whilst The Humber and The Wash designated sites are avoidable there is the potential for adverse effects on the interest features both habitats and species for which a number of these sites are designated.	Potential effects on Humber Estuary SAC, SPA, Ramsar site and SSSI, Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Dunes and Gibraltar Point SAC and Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe Sand Dunes SSSI depending on landfall selection. Potential for direct effects on designated sites along the north Norfolk coast including Cromer Shoal Chalk Beds MCZ, The Wash and North Norfolk Coast SAC, Holkham National Nature Reserve, and North Norfolk Coast RAMSAR, SSSI and IBA; it would not be possible to avoid all designated areas. Direct effects on the Greater Wash SPA which would

	ECO-5 Grimsby West to Lincolnshire Connection Substation(s), Lincolnshire Connection Substation(s) to Walpole	ECO-6 Grimsby West to Lincolnshire Connection Substation(s), Lincolnshire Connection Substation(s) Weston Marsh substation(s), Weston Marsh substation(s) to Walpole	ECSS 2 Grimsby West to Walpole Subsea
			be unavoidable offshore and would require a cable crossing. Potential for effects on additional designated ecological sites including River Nar SSSI depending on onshore routeing.
Landscape & Visual	The Lincolnshire Wolds AONB itself would be avoided by the OHL, however there is potential for long-term effects on views from the AONB particularly given the low-lying open topography with views from the Wolds to the coast. Potential for views of new Lincolnshire Connection Substation(s) infrastructure from within the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB depending on site selection. Potential for long term landscape and visual effects due to the introduction of new substation infrastructure, particularly at a Lincolnshire Connection Substation(s) in a landscape which currently has little major development. Potential for adverse landscape and visual impacts due to the introduction of a new substation at Walpole. Potential effects on visual amenity for residents along affected settlement edges and at scattered properties.	The Lincolnshire Wolds AONB itself would be avoided by the OHL, however there is potential for long-term effects on views from the AONB particularly given the low-lying open topography with views from the Wolds to the coast. Potential for views of new Lincolnshire Connection Substation(s) infrastructure from within the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB depending on site selection. Potential for long term landscape and visual effects due to the introduction of new substation infrastructure, particularly at Lincolnshire Connection Substation(s) and Weston Marsh substation(s) in a landscape which currently has little major development. Potential for adverse landscape and visual impacts due to the introduction of a new substation at Walpole. Potential effects on	Temporary landscape and visual effects, including impacts on the landscape of the Norfolk Coast AONB which could not be avoided. Views within and from both the AONB and North Norfolk Heritage Coast may be temporary period during construction. The Lincolnshire Wolds AONB would be avoided. Potential for temporary adverse visual effects on users of the Peddar's Way and Norfolk Coast Path National Trail. Potential for adverse residual permanent effects during the operational phase of the converter stations at Grimsby West and Walpole.

	ECO-5 Grimsby West to Lincolnshire Connection Substation(s), Lincolnshire Connection Substation(s) to Walpole	ECO-6 Grimsby West to Lincolnshire Connection Substation(s), Lincolnshire Connection Substation(s) Weston Marsh substation(s), Weston Marsh substation(s) to Walpole	ECSS 2 Grimsby West to Walpole Subsea
		visual amenity for residents along affected settlement edges and at scattered properties.	
Historic Environment	Potential effects on the setting of a number of Scheduled Monuments and listed buildings dependent on OHL routeing.	Potential effects on the setting of a number of Scheduled Monuments and listed buildings dependent on OHL routeing.	Potential effects on the setting of a number of Scheduled Monuments and listed buildings dependent on converter station siting at Grimsby West and Walpole.
Physical	Crossings of main rivers (including the River Witham, the River Welland and the River Nene.). Flood Zone 2 and 3 and GSPZ are expected to be unavoidable. Areas of Flood Zone 2 or 3 are expected to be unavoidable for the siting of new substation infrastructure at Walpole.	Crossings of main rivers (including the River Witham, the River Welland and the River Nene.). Flood Zone 2 and 3 and GSPZ are expected to be unavoidable. Areas of Flood Zone 2 or 3 are expected to be unavoidable for the siting of new substation infrastructure at Weston Marsh, Walpole.	The onshore cable would have to cross several unavoidable watercourses including main rivers and associated floodplains including the Great Ouse, as well as a large number of drainage ditches. Areas of Flood Zone 2 or 3 are expected to be unavoidable for the siting of converter station infrastructure at Walpole.
SOCIO-ECONOMIC			
Settlements and Population	Numerous large urban areas within the study area including Grimsby and Boston as well as numerous smaller towns and settlements scattered throughout. These areas would limit routeing opportunities at several points, particularly to the west and south of Grimsby where the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB is also a constraint.	Numerous large urban areas within the study area including Grimsby and Boston as well as numerous smaller towns and settlements scattered throughout. These areas would limit routeing opportunities at several points, particularly to the west and south of Grimsby where the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB is also a constraint.	The large urban areas of Grimsby and Kings Lynn as well as numerous smaller towns and settlements scattered throughout the study area present a constraint for routeing of an underground cable.

	ECO-5 Grimsby West to Lincolnshire Connection Substation(s), Lincolnshire Connection Substation(s) to Walpole	ECO-6 Grimsby West to Lincolnshire Connection Substation(s), Lincolnshire Connection Substation(s) Weston Marsh substation(s), Weston Marsh substation(s) to Walpole	ECSS 2 Grimsby West to Walpole Subsea
Tourism and Recreation	The Witham Way and Havenside Country Parks located to the west and east of Boston respectively are linear in nature and would need to be considered during routeing. A number of NCN cross the study area. The Lincolnshire coast and north Norfolk coast are popular tourist destinations with a number of coastal resorts and extensive areas of holiday accommodation. It is considered that effects upon the local tourist economy could be minimised through careful routing and design	The Witham Way and Havenside Country Parks located to the west and east of Boston respectively are linear in nature and would need to be considered during routeing. A number of NCN cross the study area. The Lincolnshire coast and north Norfolk coast are popular tourist destinations with a number of coastal resorts and extensive areas of holiday accommodation. It is considered that effects upon the local tourist economy could be minimised through careful routing and design	A number of NCN cross the study area including routes to/from Grimsby and to/from Kings Lynn. The Lincolnshire coast and north Norfolk coast are popular tourist destinations with a number of coastal resorts and extensive areas of holiday accommodation. It is considered that effects upon the local tourist economy could be minimised through careful routing and design
Infrastructure	There are a number of trunk roads and A roads within the study area including the A16 and A17. A number of these roads would need to be crossed particularly where they extend across the study area from east to west. Several railway lines would need to be crossed.	There are a number of trunk roads and A roads within the study area including the A16 and A17. A number of these roads would need to be crossed particularly where they extend across the study area from east to west. Several railway lines would need to be crossed.	Numerous marine infrastructure present including offshore wind farms, offshore cable routes and various pipelines and oil and gas infrastructure; it is unlikely that crossings of cables and pipelines could be avoided entirely. There are a number of marine aggregate dredging areas and shipping and navigation constraints which would need to be considered as part of subsea cable routeing. Onshore road and rail crossings required.

Appendix H
Beyond 2030 Publication

nationalgrid

Appendix H Beyond 2030 Publication

H.1 Pathway to 2030 – HND

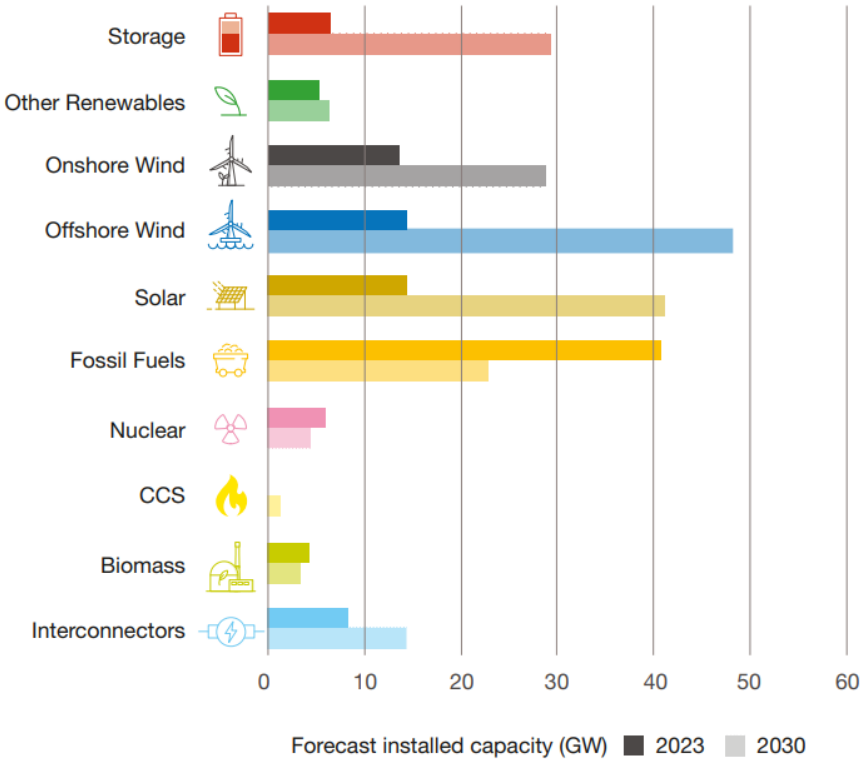
H.1.1 In 2023, 51% of the electricity in GB used was generated by zero-carbon sources. It is expected that by 2030, the electricity system will more commonly run on 100% renewable energy sources for measurable time frames, which will be vital to meet the UK Government's ambition of having an electricity mix consisting of 95% low-carbon power.

H.1.2 Adjacent to the changes in the electricity network, gas consumption has also been projected to fall by 40% by 2030, which will be realised through the potential to replace natural gas with hydrogen where possible, and the potential to create opportunities to make use of economically efficient and reliable electricity for heating and transport.

H.1.3 This transition can be facilitated through the development of large-scale offshore wind generation, a sector that has seen Great Britain arise as a world leader. Within offshore wind, refinement of the approach used can help reduce the effects of increased infrastructure needs to effectively transfer power across the transmission system. The previous UK government established the Offshore Transmission Network Review (OTNR) with the goal of developing a holistic network design that will ensure the delivery of 50GW of offshore wind by 2030 remains viable.

H.1.4 The bar chart below from the Beyond 2030 report shows the generation mix in 2023 in comparison to the forecasted mix in 2030.

Figure H.1 – Generation mix comparison (2023 and 2030) [source: Beyond 2030,ESO, March 2024]



H.1.5 ESO's Pathway to 2030 Holistic Network Design (HND) 2022 plan to connect 23 GW of offshore wind in the transmission system seeks to reduce reliance on imports of gas and reduce CO2 emissions by up to two million tonnes between 2030 and 2032. To facilitate this growth in the offshore sector, a recommendation of over £60 billion of investment into the transmission system has been made. This investment will comprise of offshore network design and 91 reinforcements to the transmission system, resulting in a holistic approach to network planning.

H.1.6 To enable this plan, engagement with the GB energy regulator, Ofgem, was required. It was concluded that a customer benefit of up to £2.1 billion would be expedited through avoidance of network congestion costs, which led Ofgem to agree on the regulatory acceleration of 26 projects in 2022.

H.1.7 The essential transmission opportunities to enable delivery of the plan in 2030 are presented in Figure 6 Notably, Grimsby to Walpole and North Humber to High Marnham are both HND essential.

Figure H.2 – Network infrastructure to be delivered by 2030 [source: Beyond 2030, ESO, March 2024]

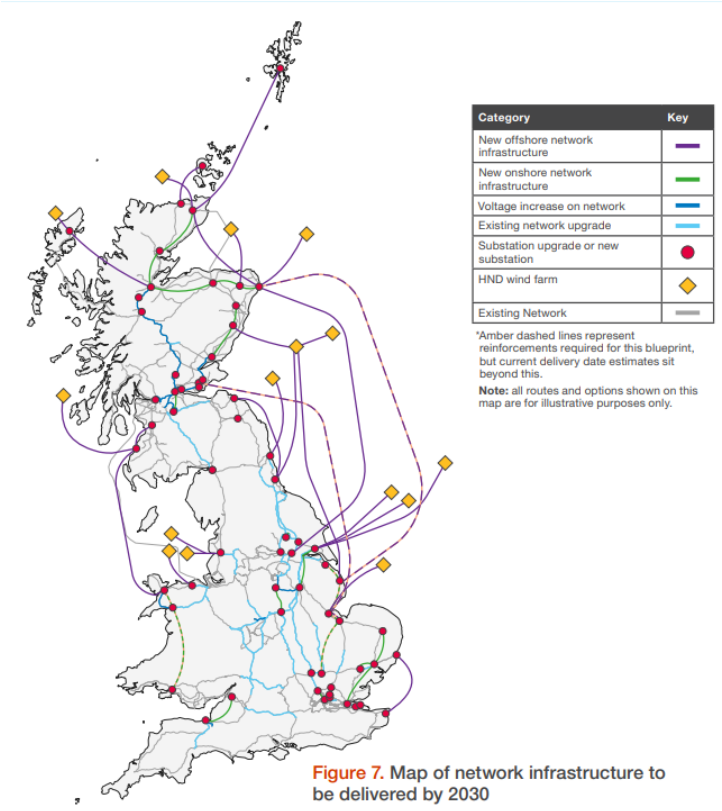


Figure 7. Map of network infrastructure to be delivered by 2030

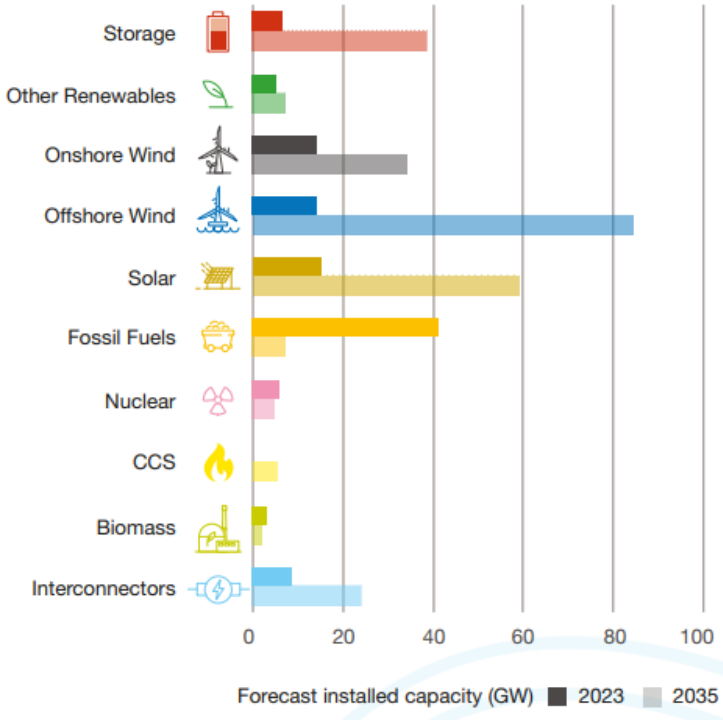
H.2 Beyond 2030 – HND FUE

H.2.1 Scoping beyond 2030, by 2035, several processes will be fully electrified and will be realised even in everyday life activities. New internal combustion engine (ICE) cars will not be sold, with only Electric Vehicles (EVs) and other zero-carbon transport options being newly available for purchase. In addition, domestic gas boilers will not be installed in new homes from 2025. The above will result in an uptake of up to approximately 30 million EVs present and up to 13 million heat pumps installed domestically and within businesses, with overall electricity demand expected to rise by 64%, in comparison to 2023.

H.2.2 The potential realised through innovation in technology development will enable further increase in the renewable energy capacity within power industries. As an example, clean hydrogen is forecasted to have a production capacity of up to 22 GW by 2035.

H.2.3 The bar chart below from the Beyond 2030 report shows the generation mix in 2023 in comparison to the forecasted mix in 2035.

Figure H.3 – Generation mix comparison (2023 and 2035) [source: Beyond 2030, ESO, March 2024]



H.2.4 As it stands, the HND scheme is not sufficient by itself to reinforce the transmission system within the Pathway to 2030, as more electricity will be generated than the network can efficiently support and transport. Therefore, the UK Government requested ESO to further develop the HND and enable a set of recommendations for a greater amount of offshore wind generation to connect to the network.

H.2.5 ESO have undertaken a network assessment of options to facilitate an efficient high-level network design, in cooperation with GB's Transmission Owners (TOs). This design implements a further 21 GW of offshore wind generation which will establish Great Britain as the owner of the largest offshore fleet in Europe. The design will be a set of holistic recommendations of measurable scale with over three times as much undersea cabling (compared to current infrastructure) needed by 2035. With this in place, power flows can be further balanced across the transmission system, enhancing energy security and reliability of supply.

H.2.6 Development of network infrastructure is required through this network design and will need to consider minimising impacts on the environment and communities. These impacts can be reduced via optimisation of network designs, early community engagement, innovative solutions and sufficient financial incentives and community packages.

H.2.7 The map below depicts the network infrastructure to be delivered beyond 2030 within the transmission system.

Figure H.4 – Network infrastructure to be delivered beyond 2030 [source: Beyond 2030, ESO, March 2024]

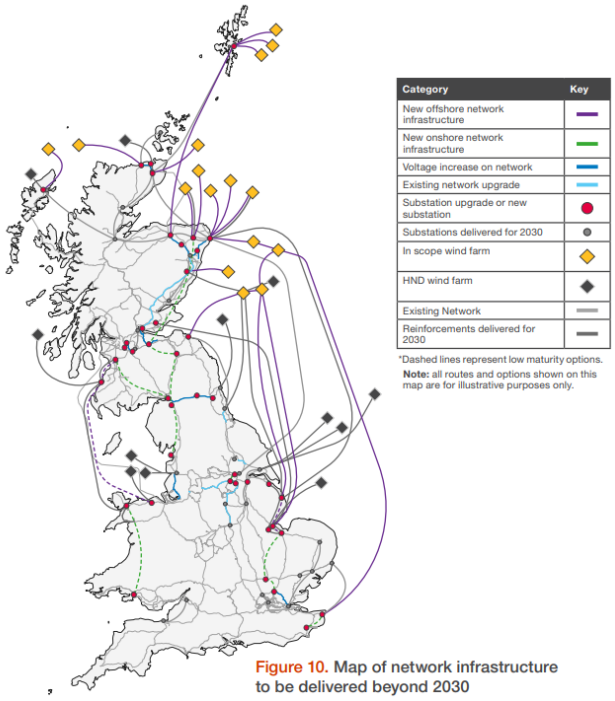


Figure 10. Map of network infrastructure to be delivered beyond 2030

H.3 Way Forward

H.3.1 The Beyond 2030 report builds on the 2022 Holistic Network Design (HND) and is a key step towards the effort to upgrade Great Britain's electricity transmission infrastructure. Both publications support the ambition of connecting a total of 86 GW of offshore wind as well as an array of other low-carbon technologies, potentially adding up to £15 billion to the economy. The plan also aims to produce significant supply chain benefits, create jobs, and facilitate greater energy security.

H.3.2 Central to achieving these goals is the UK Government's Transmission Acceleration Action Plan (TAAP) from November 2023, which outlines a series of activities to reduce network delivery times and gain societal consent for the transformational infrastructure changes.

H.3.3 The Beyond 2030 report also sets out the key role of strategic demand - utilising efficient placement of generation to potentially reduce future infrastructure needs. The Transmission Owners (TOs) will commence the Detailed Network Design (DND) phase to optimise the Beyond 2030 report's proposed designs. Continued coordination among project developers is crucial to minimise environmental and community impacts. Continued alignment with broader industry and policy changes to facilitate the decarbonisation of Great Britain's electricity system is crucial and will facilitate the necessary transition to whole energy system planning to meet rising energy needs.

H.3.4 The Beyond 2030 report has set out information on key policies and proposals, listed below, that are either under consideration or will be taken forward. These policies

and proposals should not be viewed in isolation but as holistic changes to the design and operation of the energy system:

- Energy Act and creation of the NESO – NESO is built upon the principles and structure of ESO and will cover Great Britain, spanning electricity and gas, giving an independent view of the whole energy system.
- Strategic Spatial Energy Plan (SSEP) – The SSEP will see UK Government targets across the whole energy system mapped spatially across Great Britain over a period of several years and define the optimal mix and location of clean generation and storage to meet forecast demand, net-zero targets and security of supply for all consumers.
- CSNP – NESO will take on the role of central whole-system planner for the energy system, at both national and regional levels, and be responsible for a new CSNP, now known as tCSNP2.
- Regional Energy Strategic Planners (RESPs) - As part of the new approach to energy planning, RESPs will support net-zero ambitions through the creation of strategic energy plans at a regional and national level, providing critical planning assumptions to inform system and network needs.
- Connections Reform – NESO will lead the development of several tactical and strategic reforms that have the potential to result in radical changes to both the size of the connections queue and how long it takes for projects which are 'ready to connect' to connect to the network.
- Network Competition - In November 2023, the TAAP outlined the Government's commitment to introduce competition for onshore transmission projects as soon as reasonably possible.
- Net Zero Market Reform (NZMR) - The objective of the NZMR programme is to outline holistic market design and complementary investment policy for net zero, and contribute to the Review of Electricity Market (REMA) debate from the perspective of Great Britain's national energy system operator.

H.4 Beyond 2030 Update

H.4.1 In June 2026, NESO published the Beyond 2030 – Electricity Transmission Update[36], The update builds on the original Beyond 2030 report published in March 2024 and reviews the recommended transmission reinforcements against updated network requirements, energy scenarios and strategic planning developments.

H.4.2 The update reaffirmed the need for the majority of the transmission reinforcements identified in the original report. It also refined a number of network designs to reflect updated assumptions, emerging evidence from ongoing project development and the latest strategic network planning activities.

H.4.3 The update forms part of the transition to NESO's wider strategic planning framework and provides a bridge between the original Beyond 2030 recommendations and subsequent strategic planning activities. Since publication of the original report, NESO has introduced Electricity Transmission Design Principles (ETDPs) and continues to progress the Strategic Spatial Energy Plan (SSEP) and Centralised Strategic Network Plan (CSNP), which will help inform future transmission network development.

[36] NESO Beyond 2030 – Electricity Transmission update report https://www.neso.energy/publications/beyond-2030

Appendix I
External Links - Reference Table

nationalgrid

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Ref Number	Description	Source
1	Grimsby to Walpole, Addendum to the Strategic Options Report, January 2024	https://www.nationalgrid.com/electricity-transmission/document/152611/download
2	National Electricity Transmission System Security and Quality of Supply Standard, NESO	https://www.neso.energy/industry-information/codes/security-and-quality-supply-standard-sqss
3	Brinsworth to High Marnham project website	https://www.nationalgrid.com/electricity-transmission/network-and-infrastructure/infrastructure-projects/brinsworth-high-marnham-uprating
4	Eastern Green Link 3 & 4 project website	https://www.nationalgrid.com/the-great-grid-upgrade/eastern-green-link-3-and-4
5	Our Approach to Consenting, National Grid Electricity Transmission, April 2022	https://www.nationalgrid.com/electricity-transmission/document/142336/download
6	Electricity Act 1989	https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1989/29/contents
7	Licenses and license conditions, Ofgem	https://www.ofgem.gov.uk/energy-policy-and-regulation/industry-licensing/licences-and-licence-conditions
8	Planning Act 2008	https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2008/29/contents
9	RIIO-3 Regulatory Framework	https://www.ofgem.gov.uk/decision/riio-3-final-determinations-electricity-transmission-gas-distribution-and-gas-transmission-sectors
10	Holistic Network Design (NESO)	https://www.neso.energy/publications/beyond-2030/holistic-network-design-offshore-wind
11	Future Energy Scenarios: NESO Pathways to Net Zero	https://www.neso.energy/publications/future-energy-scenarios-fes
12	Network Options Assessment 2021/22 Refresh, National Grid ESO, July 2022	https://www.neso.energy/document/262981/download

Ref Number	Description	Source
13	Decision on the initial findings of our Electricity Transmission Network Planning Review, Ofgem	https://www.ofgem.gov.uk/publications/decision-initial-findings-our-electricity-transmission-network-planning-review
14	The Ten-Point Plan for a Green Industrial Revolution, HM Government, November 2020	https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5fb5513de90e0720978b1a6f/10_POINT_PLAN_BOOKLET.pdf
15	Energy White Paper: Powering our Net Zero Future, HM Government, December 2020	https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5fdc61e2d3bf7f3a3bdc8cbf/201216_BEIS_EWP_Command_Paper_Accessible.pdf
16	Net Zero Strategy: Build Back Greener, HM Government, October 2021	https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6194dfa4d3bf7f0555071b1b/net-zero-strategy-beis.pdf
17	British Energy Security Strategy, HM Government, April 2022	https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/626112c0e90e07168e3fdba3/british-energy-security-strategy-web-accessible.pdf
18	Powering up Britain, HM Government, March 2023	https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/642468ff2fa8480013ec0f39/powering-up-britain-joint-overview.pdf
19	Powering up Britain: Energy Security Plan, HM Government, March 2023	https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/642708eafbe620000f17daa2/powering-up-britain-energy-security-plan.pdf
20	Clean Power 2030 Action Plan: A new era of clean electricity, UK Government, December 2024	https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/677bc80399c93b7286a396d6/clean-power-2030-action-plan-main-report.pdf
27	Eastern Green Link 3 & 4 project website	https://www.nationalgrid.com/the-great-grid-upgrade/eastern-green-link-3-and-4
28	Pylon Design an RIBA competition	https://www.architecture.com/awards-and-competitions-landing-page/competitions-landing-page/pylon
29	SF6 is a greenhouse gas with a global warming potential, according to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, Working Group 1 (Climate Change 2007, Chapter	www.ipcc.ch/publications_and_data/ar4/wg1/en/ch2s2-10-2.html

Ref Number	Description	Source
	2.10.2), of 22,800 times that of CO2.	
31	The Institution of Engineering and Technology (IET) - A Comparison of Electricity Transmission Technologies report	https://www.theiet.org/media/axwkktkb/100110238_001-rev-j-electricity-transmission-costs-and-characteristics_final-full.pdf
33	The Green Book (2022) sets the government discount rate of 3.5% page 116	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-green-book-appraisal-and-evaluation-in-central-government
37	NESO Beyond 2030 – Electricity Transmission update report	https://www.neso.energy/publications/beyond-2030

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