

12 August 2022

Dear Cllr Rout

Thank you for your letter dated 25 July.

As you know, decarbonisation of the energy system along with the urgent need to increase security of our country's energy supply is a significant challenge facing our country and involves a radical change in where our energy comes from. I am sure you will agree that it is important that this transition is cost effective for consumers, particularly given the current pressures on household budgets.

Government has set clear targets for the development of clean power and National Grid is at the heart of delivering this ambition, which requires us to reinforce our network across the country. East Anglia GREEN is identified as a key project on this journey as we propose to deliver more capacity through an onshore network solution. This proposal was shaped after very careful consideration of all our duties and responsibilities, alongside current planning policy, as set by Government.

As we scope our projects, we consider numerous technology solutions. Offshore solutions were considered as part of our strategic proposal to upgrade the network in East Anglia and are part of our recommended solution. National Grid's appraisals, which were based on our knowledge of the network and understanding of the capacity and costs of developing subsea links, concluded that the right solution was an offshore DC link between the Sizewell area and Kent in combination with onshore reinforcement between Norwich and Tilbury (East Anglia Green).

We considered further offshore options however concluded these would not comply with our obligations to be economic and efficient and therefore, would not be supported under the current regulatory framework when consentable lower cost onshore alternatives were available. This process also considered alternative onshore options, which when considered were also ruled out at this stage of the project development process.

Following feedback local communities, your council, other local authorities and MPs, we are now reviewing the information we have published to date and have committed to providing more detail on subsea alternatives and why we ruled out a subsea option.

The information we publish will provide a more detailed explanation of the costs and technical aspects associated with a subsea solution to enable a clearer comparison with the onshore solution being proposed. We will also try to set out our decision making process more clearly and explain how we align our decisions to our statutory duties and planning policy.

The information we publish will, rightly, be available for independent scrutiny and challenge and we hope it will help local communities and elected representatives understand our position.

I would like to assure you that should more detailed scrutiny show a flaw in the decision-making process, we would be pleased to review the proposals. Similarly, if there are any changes to UK Government's planning policy, this would also lead to proposals being reviewed. I hope this provides reassurance that we at National Grid want to be as transparent as possible throughout the project development process.

In your letter you also ask us to commission an independent review of HVDC options for East Anglia and to consider other wider, future potential benefits associated with an integrated offshore network. Such a report would fall within the remit of BEIS or National Grid Electricity System Operator (ESO) which is a legally separate part of the National Grid Group.

We are working closely with statutory consultees, including local authorities, to develop our proposals further. We will hold a further statutory public consultation which will take place next year and will take account of local feedback as we progress through the Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) process ahead of submitting a Development Consent Order (DCO) for consideration in 2024.

Thank you once again for your letter, we recognise that building new infrastructure is sensitive for local communities, whether onshore or offshore. National Grid is committed to work with you, local communities, and all stakeholders to find the most appropriate and affordable way to move new sources of clean green energy from where it is generated to where it is needed.

If you would like to meet up to talk through our proposals or the information above, please get in touch.

I hope to meet you soon.

Yours sincerely



Simon Pepper
Senior Project Manager