



Department for Energy Security & Net Zero

Andrew Bowie MP
Minister for Nuclear and Networks

**Department for Energy Security
& Net Zero**

www.gov.uk

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James Cartlidge MP
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

3 August 2023

Dear James,

Thank you for your letter dated 25 July regarding National Grid Electricity Transmission's (NGET) non statutory consultation on the Norwich to Tilbury line.

As you note, the timing and content of any consultation on planning is a matter for the developer responsible for the Norwich to Tilbury line, NGET, to determine. The Norwich to Tilbury line non statutory consultation¹ is ongoing and presents opportunity for communities to share their views, it concludes on 21 August 2023. This is the second non statutory consultation undertaken by this developer, and there will be further consultations by the project before the application is submitted.

I understand that you and constituents are disappointed that the consultation was not aligned with the upcoming Electricity System Operator (ESO) study. NGET has been clear with officials in my department that, while there is a need to progress the project in its current proposed form through this consultation in order to meet legally binding connection agreements and targets; it is acutely aware of the upcoming ESO study and are prepared to reflect changes to the project should any arise from the study outcomes. I hope this will go some way to reassure you and your constituents.

As you note, the ESO will undertake a study to re-evaluate transmission options (both onshore and offshore) considering the Offshore Coordination Support Scheme outcomes. In doing so they will apply the four principles of the Holistic Network Design as part of the independent study. It is my understanding that NGET have committed to carefully consider the recommendations of the independent ESO study ahead of their statutory consultation for this project.

Given the role of the Secretary of State in determining Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project applications for development consent, the Department cannot comment on specific concerns regarding a proposed infrastructure project to avoid prejudicing any ultimate planning decision. I can assure you that in taking the decision, the Secretary of State will consider a range of factors relevant to any development consent application.

¹ <https://www.nationalgrid.com/electricity-transmission/network-and-infrastructure/infrastructure-projects/norwich-to-tilbury/public-consultation>

You may wish to write to NGET² highlighting your concerns on the quality and the content of the consultation as responsible party for the transmission project to highlight the points you raise in relation to the Norwich to Tilbury line. As the responsible organisation, independent of Government, they are best placed to respond in full on these matters. Please do remain assured of my continued attention to the issues you and OffSET colleagues raise.

Thank you for writing, I trust this information will be helpful.

Yours aye,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized 'A' followed by a horizontal line that ends in a small arrowhead.

Andrew Bowie MP
Minister for Nuclear and Networks

² contact@n-t.nationalgrid.com