

Meeting of the Planning Committee on 17th July 2024

Non-Statutory Stage 1 Consultation from National Grid for the Chesterfield to Willington Project.

Appendix 2: Response to National Grid's Consultation

1.1 National Grid Consultation has an on-line response, which sets out a series of questions. The questions considered to be relevant to the District of Bolsover together with potential responses are set out below. The various figure numbers in this appendix reflect the numbering from the Planning Committee Report.

Question 1a) Do you have any comments to make on our work to identify our preferred strategic option?

1.2 The Council acknowledges that it has been identified that the electrical high voltage transmission network requires reinforcement in the East Midlands. Ten potential strategic options have been studied by National Grid of which four options were considered as possibilities:

- EDN-1 – New Chesterfield substation to Ratcliffe-on-Soar 400 kV Substation – 48 km.
- EDN-2 – New Chesterfield substation to Willington 400 kV Substation – 51 km.
- EDN-3 – New High Marnham substation to Ratcliffe-on-Soar 400 kV Substation – 61 km.
- EDN-4 – New High Marnham substation to Willington 400 kV Substation – 78 km

1.3 The current consultation documents identify that EDN-2 route is approximately 60 km rather than 51 km identified in the report. This raises whether the conclusions set out in Chesterfield to Willington Strategic Options Report, March 2024 are still valid:

- Under paragraph 11.5.1 it is set out that EDN-3 has a 10 km longer route length than EDN-2, or a 13 km longer route length than EDN-1 without any additional socio-economic or environmental benefit. Therefore, EDN-1 and EDN-2 are preferable in environmental and socio-economic terms. Is this conclusion still the same?
- Under paragraph 11.5.2 There is a similarity in the costs between options EDN-1 and EDN-2 which means that cost is not a material difference between those options. Is this still the case?
- Under paragraph 11.5.3 it is stated that *“Whilst EDN-1 and EDN-3 perform marginally better than EDN-2 in terms of network benefit, they each have*

technical disadvantages by comparison to EDN-2. Those options are also physically more constrained in terms of routeing due to constraints into Ratcliffe-on-Soar Substation. Given this fact and the lower electrical complexity of EDN-2, this option would be preferred from a technical cost and complexity assessment.” Given the additional distances of EN-2 does this aspect out weight any additional costs?

Question 2a) Do you agree with the Emerging Preferred Corridor that has been identified for each section of the proposed route?

1.4 The option sets out are ‘

| | Strongly agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Section 1: Chesterfield substation to Stretton | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

It is proposed to respond that the Council ‘disagree’.

Question 2b) Please tell us the reason for your answer. Please also use this box to provide any comments you might have about the work we have done to identify our Emerging Preferred Corridor.

1.5 The Chesterfield to Willington Corridor Preliminary Routeing and Siting Study, March 2024 followed on from the Strategic Options Report. It initially identified 8 preliminary corridors within the context of Chesterfield to Willington. Preliminary Corridors 1, 2, 3, and 4 were taken forward for further refinement with two additional options being consider, Corridor 5 and 6. The additional corridors were to provide additional potential routing options within the eastern extent of the Study Area, which potentially avoided the highly constrained areas further to the west, and to maximise potential opportunities associated with following major infrastructure corridors such as the M1 motorway in certain locations. The six refined corridors did not all form end-to-end solutions, they were then split into discrete ‘sections’ with a series of connecting links to other corridors.

1.6 Essentially, the Emerged Preferred Corridor resulted from a merger of parts of different corridors set out in Figure 3. For each corridor a general assessment of the following aspects is undertaken:

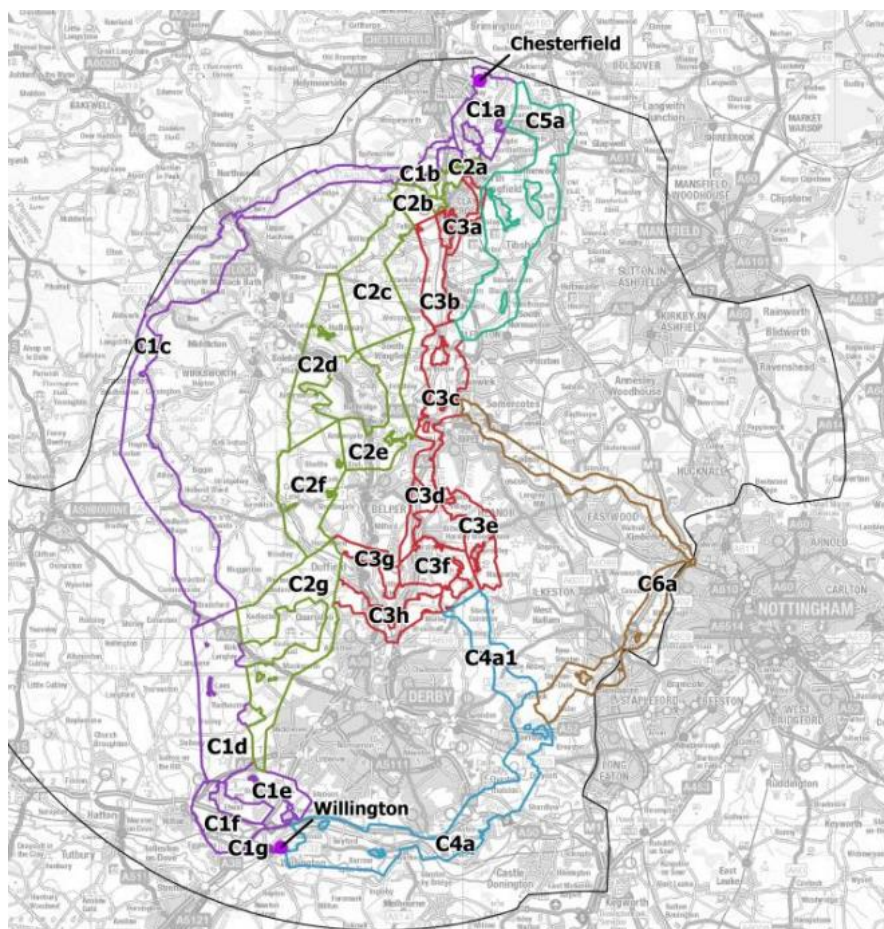
- Ecology.
- Landscape and Visual Value.
- Historic Environment.
- Socio Economic.
- Water, Soils, Geology, Noise and Vibration.

1.7 However, these assessments are undertaken on a corridor basis rather than for the separate sections of each corridor. The Study identifies various alternative routes including:

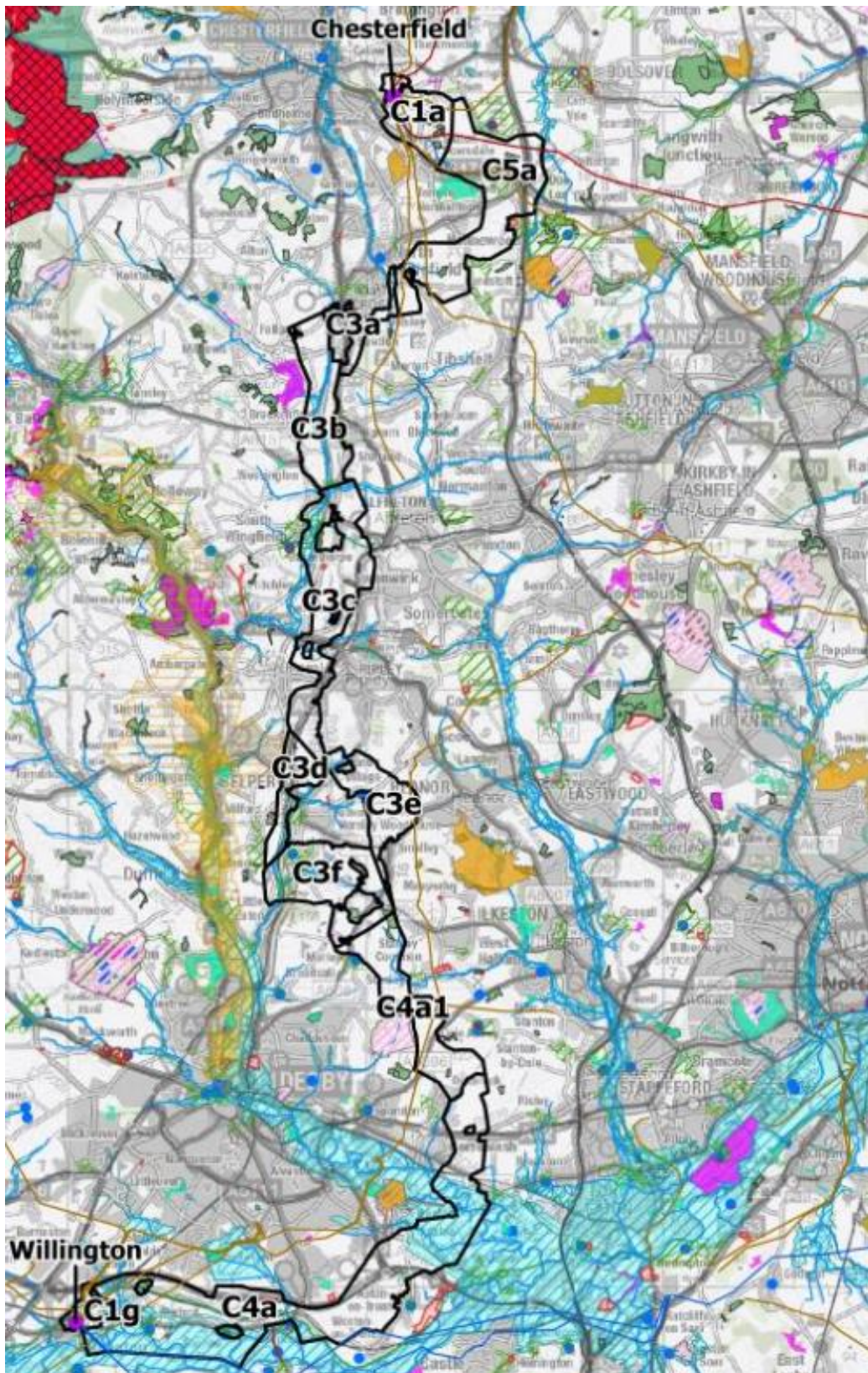
- Link 1; which connects Corridor 1 at Section C1a to Corridor 2 at Section C2a.
- Link 2; which connects Corridor 1 at Section C1a to Corridor 5 at Section C5a.
- Link 3; which connects Corridor 1 at Section C1b to Corridor 2 at Section C2b.

1.8 In addition, Figure 4 would also indicate that there could be links between C2a and C3b. There is the potential to join up with Section 3c, which would negate the requirement for Section C5a. These assessments are undertaken on a corridor basis rather than for the separate sections of each corridor. However, the basis of the assessment does make it more difficult to consider these alternative options.

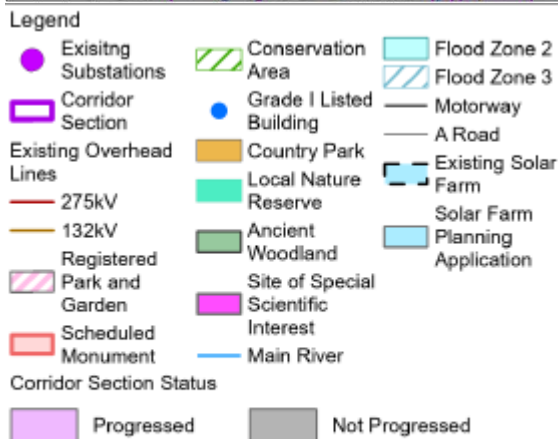
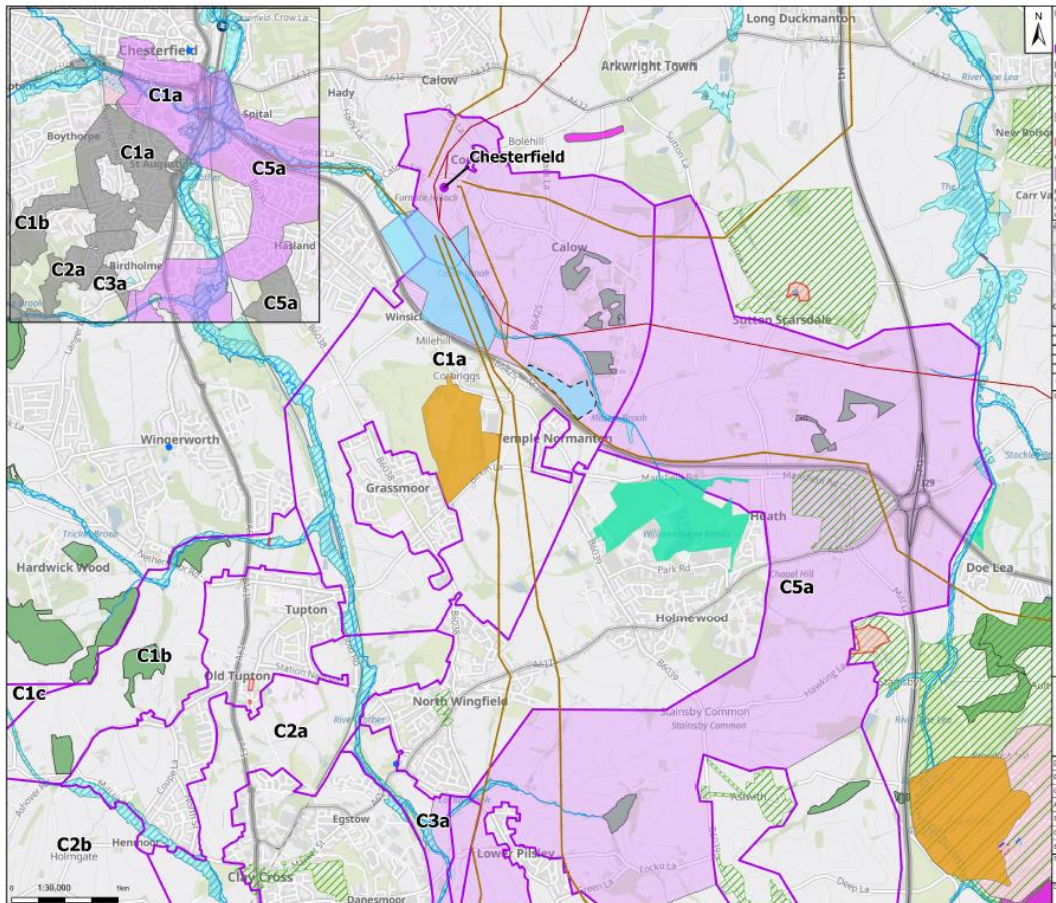
Figure 4: National Grid Chesterfield to Willington Stage 1 Consultation Emerging Preferred Corridor Within Bolsover.
Source: The Chesterfield to Willington Corridor Preliminary Routeing and Siting Study March 2024. National Grid.



Corridors 1,2,3,4,5,and 6 considered in The Chesterfield to Willington Corridor Preliminary Routeing and Siting Study March 2024. National Grid.



Preferred Corridor in The Chesterfield to Willington Corridor Preliminary Routing and Siting Study March 2024. National Grid.



Notes
 GB Background: Contains OS data © Crown Copyright and database right 2023
 Contains data from OS Zoomstack

Preferred Corridor C5A (within Bolsover District) in The Chesterfield to Willington Corridor Preliminary Routing and Siting Study March 2024. National Grid.

1.9 National Grid considers the following:

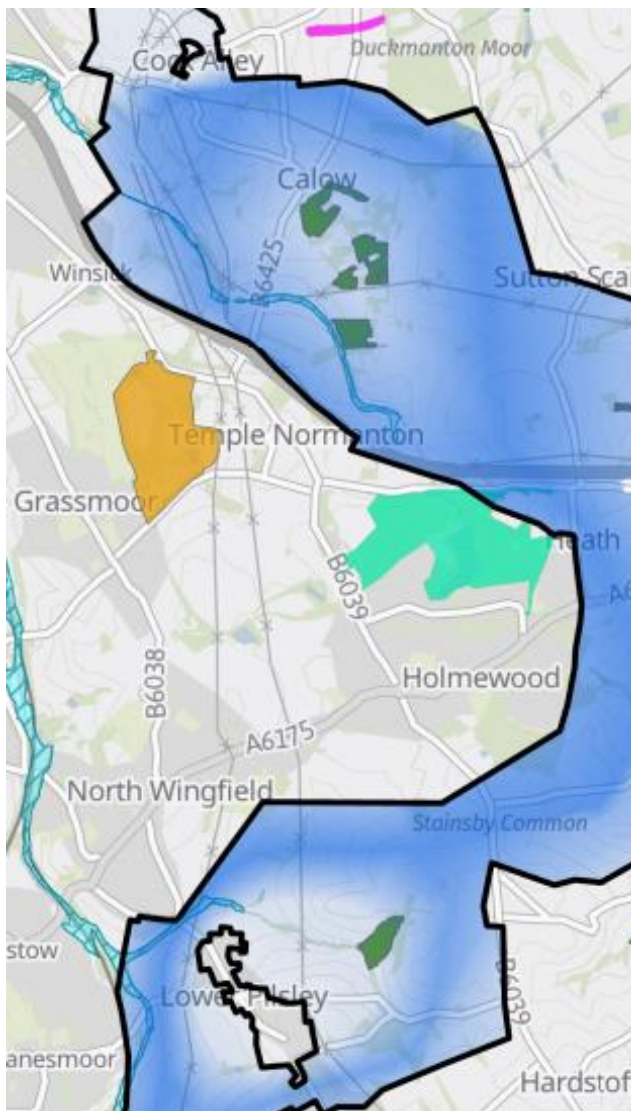
- Corridor 1 - The presence of the Peak District National Park as an area of national importance was ultimately determined to be a feature which should be avoided (in alignment with Holford Rule 1),

- Corridor 2 - Corridor 2 contains a significantly environmentally constrained including several areas of ancient woodland, Conservation Areas, clusters of listed buildings, and – most notably as a major area of highest amenity value and international importance – potential crossings of the Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site. This corridor was therefore not taken forward. (In alignment with Holford Rules 1 and 2).
- Option to route to the south west of Chesterfield – This route would link to Corridor 3 via Sections C1b/C2a and C2b to Section C3b, or via Section C2a to Section C3a. However, this is a more heavily populated area with other constraints.
- Option to route to east and link to Corridor C5a where there is an absence of larger settlements and ancient woodlands can be avoided through appropriate routing.

Paragraph 9.2.10 of National Grid Corridor Preliminary Routeing and Siting Study, March 2024, sets out *“Overall, it was considered that an option which seeks to extend south east out of Chesterfield Substation to the north of the A617 would comprise part of the emerging preferred corridor. This avoids the significantly constrained southern part of Section C1a and any potential link through Sections C1b and C2a which contain several residential areas and pinch points, whilst it traverses an area where there is also existing linear infrastructure including overhead lines and the A617. It is considered that the amount of underground cabling required for the 400kV route would be limited in comparison to an option to the southwest of Chesterfield Substation, whilst it may also be possible to avoid existing constraints such as the areas of ancient woodland through appropriate routeing in this section. The development of the Hasland Solar Farm will be monitored and assessed as the Project progresses through further design phases.”*

- 1.10 In relation to Corridor Section 5a, it is noted that existing power lines are located between Holmewood and North Wingfield, Figure 5. These run in a north to south direction towards Lower Pilsley. On this basis it is not clear why the route could not utilise the existing power line or whether addition lines could be located in this area? The analysis in paragraph 6.8.2 identifies that *“Due to the number of settlements within the eastern extent of the Study Area, there are highly constrained areas within this corridor, where passing within 100m of residential properties and settlements is likely unavoidable: between North Wingfield and Holmewood, and Holmewood and Heath..”* This would reduce the distance travelled in an area which does not appear from the environment and heritage maps to have any significant environmental or heritage aspect. But the indication is that it would have impact residential properties.

Figure 5: Holmewood and North Wingfield Area.



Heritage

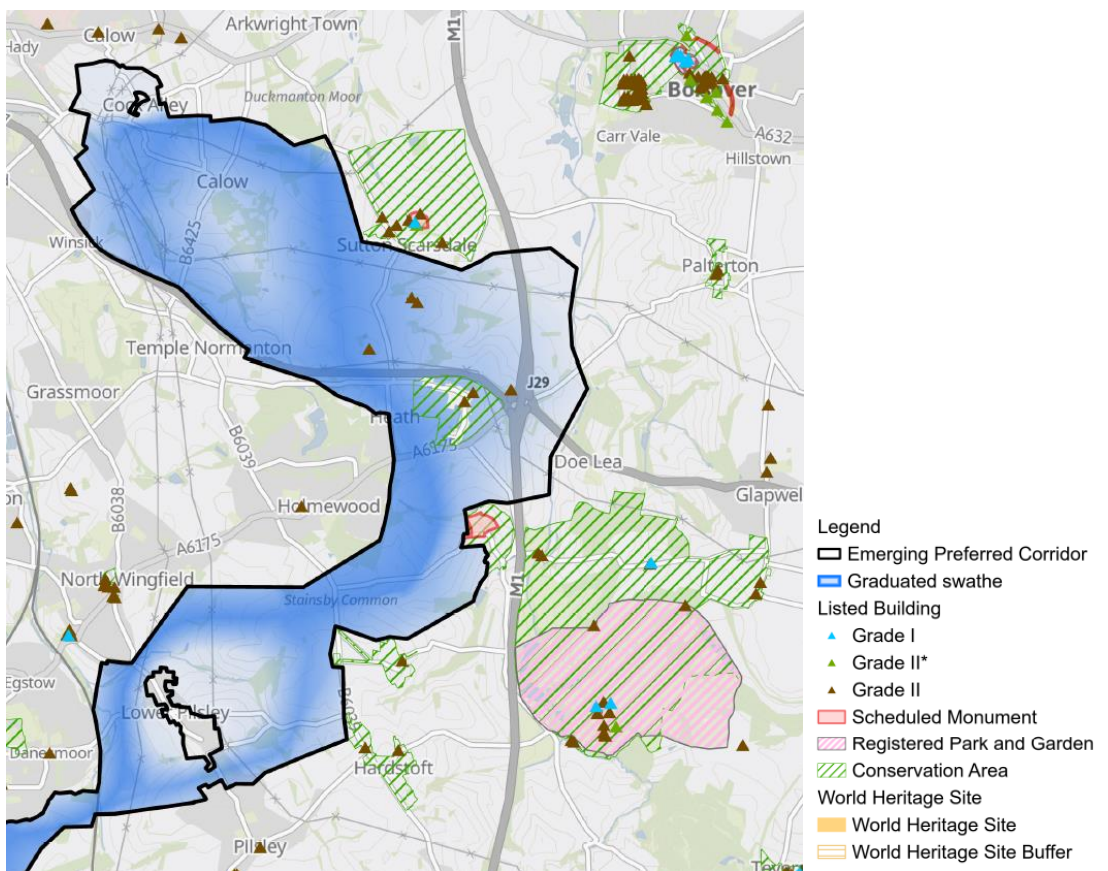
1.11 A key concern of the Council is to avoid negative impacts on heritage assets. Within the proximity of the Emerging Corridor both with the District and close to the district boundary are a number of heritage assets. These include:

- Hardwick Hall listed as Grade 1 (List Entry Number: 1051617).
- Hardwick Old Hall Scheduled Monument (List Entry Number: 1015889).
- Hardwick Hall Registered Park and Garden listed as Grade 1 (List Entry Number: 1000450).
- There are various other listed building within the Park to Hardwick Hall.
- Bolsover Castle listed as Grade 1 (List Entry Number:1108976).
- Stainsby defended manorial complex including site of chapel is a schedule monument (List Entry Number: 1015890)

- Conservation areas are located at Hardwick and Rowthorne, Stainsby, Astwith and Hardstoft.
- Various locally listed heritage assets are located within this area.

Outside Bolsover District, but in close proximity to the Corridor, is Sutton Scarsdale Hall listed Grade 1 (listed entry number 1108914) and a schedule monument with a number of other listed building in the vicinity of the Hall. Heath is a conservation area.

Figure 6 Heritage Assets in Bolsover District
Source: National Grid Constraints Heritage Map



1.12 The statutory requirement¹ for an NSIP in relation to heritage is set out in the Infrastructure Planning (Decision) Regulations 2010, Regulation 3 :

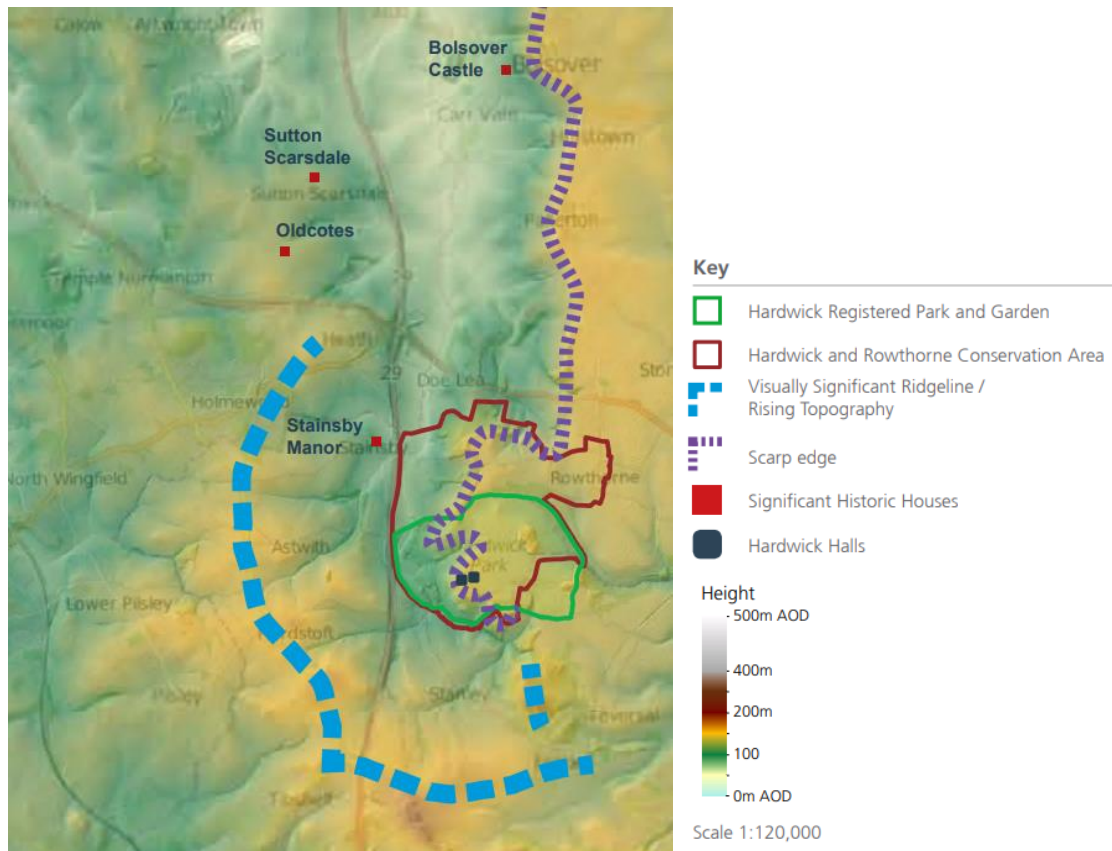
- 1) When deciding an application which affects a listed building or its setting, the decision-maker must have regard to the desirability of preserving the listed building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

¹ Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 is not relevant to a DCO as it only applies to planning permissions.

- 2) When deciding an application relating to a conservation area, the decision-maker must have regard to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.
 - 3) When deciding an application for development consent which affects or is likely to affect a scheduled monument or its setting, the decision-maker must have regard to the desirability of preserving the scheduled monument or its setting.
- 1.13 The Overarching National Policy Statement for Energy (EN-1) November 2023 sets out the relevant policies for decision making relating to the historic environment in 5.9 Historic Environment. It stresses that the sum of the heritage interests that a heritage asset holds is referred to as its significance. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting (5.9.3).
- 1.14 In close proximity to the Corridor are the Grade 1 listed buildings at Hardwick Hall, Bolsover Castle and Sutton Scarsdale Hall. The Grade I listings reflects that the buildings and their setting are of exceptional national architectural or historical importance. It is important for the setting to be understood in relation to the heritage asset and considerable importance and weight should be given to the desirability of preserving the setting of these heritage asset.
- 1.15 The Magnesian plateau is a dominant physical feature within the District of Bolsover and the escarpment and ridge provide the setting to two of the District's most impressive heritage buildings: Hardwick Hall and Bolsover Castle.
- 1.16 Hardwick Hall forms the centre point of a highly important group of designated and non-designated historic buildings and landscapes, all of which draw a large part of their significance from their relationship with the Hall and in turn reinforce the significance of the Hall by forming positive elements in its setting. The Hardwick Hall Setting Study 2016 (Atkins on behalf of the National Trust) sets out the social and economic connections, landscape character of the area surrounding Hardwick Hall and the important views from various points. Figure 7 illustrates the topography. Further information on the visible impact is set out in Map 10 - Theoretical Visibility from Hardwick Hall roof of the Study.
- 1.17 The Corridor Preliminary Routeing and Siting Study at paragraph 7.7.10 acknowledges that there is the potential for impacts to the visual amenity for Hardwick Hall and recognises the sensitivity of given the further use of the land as a Country Park and National Trust property.

Figure 7: Hardwick Hall Topography, Ridgelines & Connected Heritage Assets

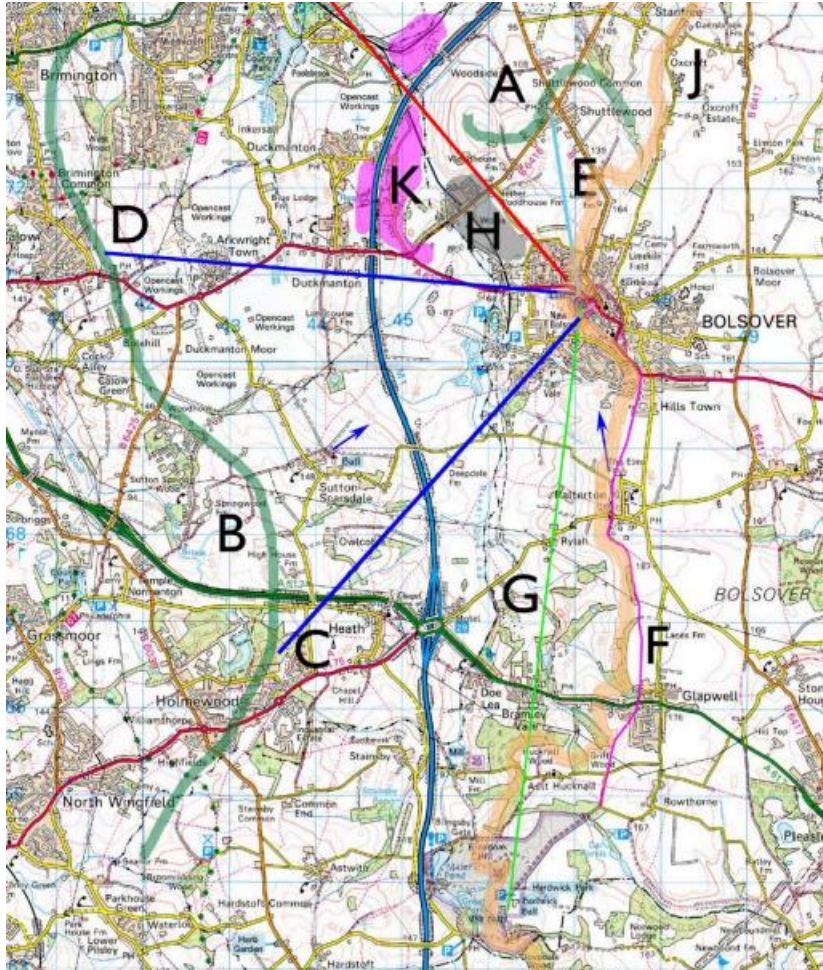
Source: The Hardwick Hall Setting Study 2016 (Atkins/ National Trust) Map 2.



- 1.18 Bolsover Castle is also a Grade 1 listed building located in a prominent location siting on the top of the ridge. The Corridor extends east of the M1 motorway and is located within this area may impact on the setting of Bolsover Castle. The English Heritage Bolsover Castle Conservation Management Plan (2012) identifies in paragraph 16.6.2 that “the Castle sits on and commands the edge of a steep escarpment, looking out over a broad, shallow valley, which is contained westwards by a rising series of low ridges. The prospect from the Castle over this dish-like valley is therefore panoramic, sweeping round in an arc from the north-west to the south. (see Fig 102, C-E). The most important - and sensitive - section is a smaller arc, or view cone, from due west round to the south-west and Sutton Scarsdale Hall (C-D).”

Figure 8: Key views from Bolsover Castle

Source: English Heritage Bolsover Castle Conservation Management Plan (2012) Fig 102 The topographical context of Bolsover (OS base). A, B are ridges substantially limiting views from Bolsover; J is the limestone escarpment; H the Coalite Site, K the Markham site. For other references, see text



- 1.19 The edge of the Corridor abuts the scheduled ancient monument Stainsby defended manorial complex and the conservation areas located at Stainsby, Astwith and Hardstoft within Bolsover. For all these conservation areas there is an intrinsic association with the agricultural character within which they site. The significance of the landscape component is critical to the overall context for the building and other structure in the conservation areas. Consequently there is the potential for both direct and indirect negative impacts on these heritage assets. A substantial emphasis should be placed on negating any significant impacts on the setting of the conservation areas and the scheduled monument.
- 1.20 If it is necessary for the transmission network to following the route through Holmewood and Heath, the Council would anticipate that the route should be on the darker shaded areas as this will reduce the impact on Stainsby Conservation Area and the scheduled monument at Stainsby. It should extend to the north of Lower Pilsey reducing the impact on Astwith and Hardstoft conservation areas as well as avoid the ancient woodlands to the

west of Aswith. This is supported by the points identified in paragraph 9.3.4 of the Corridor Preliminary Routeing and Siting Study in that:

- the area around the east of Astwith and Hardstoft being situated on a more exposed upland ridge, has the potential for visual impacts associated with an overhead line,
- it facilitates a path further away from Stainsby, and
- is further away from Hardwick Hall Registered Park and Gardens and the Hardwick and Rowthorne Conservation Area.

1.21 The Council's Local Plan looks "To conserve, enhance, and where possible regenerate the District's distinctive historic environment, and cultural heritage assets including the wider settings associated with the District's outstanding heritage assets." This reflects in policies to protect important local and longer distance views of important landmarks or landscapes, such as Bolsover Castle, and Hardwick Hall and Estate. In this context, the Council consider that:

- If the route of the proposed transmission line was amended it would substantially negate the impact on the heritage assets identified above.
- Under National Policy Statement EN-1 an assessment of any likely significant heritage will be required and considered in relation to the impacts on the heritage assets. EN-1 emphasises that any harm or loss of significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting) should require clear and convincing justification. Therefore, the impact on heritage assets forms an important aspect in determining the final route of the transmission lines.
- If it is determined that an alternative route is not to be taken forward, National Grid must give full consideration on how to mitigate the impact of the heritage assets and particularly the Grade 1 designated heritage assets.

Environment

1.22 It is noted that the environmental constraints do not take into account Local Wildlife Sites which are protected under Local Plan policies by local councils. This is an additional aspect that should be considered particularly given the emphasis of the Environmental Act 2021 and biodiversity net gain. The Council does not support a route which would have a negative impact on biodiversity and the environment.

Question 3a) Do you have a preference for the new line to be located north or south of Calow?

- 1.23 The preference is for the route to be located to the south of Calow to minimise the impact on the setting of heritage assets and enable the route to follow the A617.

Question 3ai) Do you have a preference to then follow the M1 or to take a shorter, straighter path between Holmewood and Heath?

- 1.24 Consideration should be given to the alternative route set out in Question 2b Holmewood and North Wingfield Area. If the existing route is taken forward, the Council would support the preferred route between Holmewood and Heath on the basis that this is likely to reduce the impact on the heritage asset identified in the response to question 2b. However, this needs to be verified by a heritage impact assessment of the proposed development.

Question 3aii) Do you have a preference for it then to go north or south of Lower Pilsley?

- 1.25 The Council would support the route to the north of Pilsley for the reasons specified in the response to question 2b.
- 1.26 Other questions relate to
- Stretton to Ripley. Questions 3b.
 - Ripley to Morley. Questions 3c.
 - Morley to Ockbrook. Questions 3d.
 - Ockbrook to Aston-on-Trent. Questions 3e.]
 - Aston-on-Trent to Willington substation. Questions 3f.

Question 4a) Do you have any general comments about these aspects at this stage that you would like us to consider?

- 1.27 As set out in the responses.

Question 5a) Is there anything we could do to reduce the effects of a new overhead line?

- 1.28 The key aspect from the Council's perspective would be to reduce the impact on the landscape and setting of the numerous heritage asset. Ideally this would be underground lines where this is justified by the potential impact on heritage assets.
- 1.29 The consultation documentation references steel lattice pylons which are 50m high. Alternative options could be the utilisation of National Grid's new T-pylons. It is understood these pylons are lower at 35m high, are sleeker on a single pole and utilise less land area. It is also indicated that they have less of an impact on the landscape than the traditional lattice pylons.

Figure 9: T-pylon.

Source: [National Grid T-Pylon – an innovative new design for Somerset](#)



Question 5b) Are there any other considerations we should consider when developing our proposals?

- 1.30 There is a requirement in Bolsover to improve job opportunities in the District. The Council is committed to ensuring that employment and skills initiatives are provided through significant new development. In undertaking the proposed transmission line, opportunities should be provided for local people to have jobs and developed skills associated with the infrastructure project.

Question 5c) In addition to our Community Grant Fund, are there other ways in which you would wish to see local communities benefit from hosting new electricity transmission infrastructure?

- 1.31 The Council notes that under National Grid's Community Grant Fund, communities impacted by construction work for new infrastructure can apply for grants of up to £20,000.
- 1.32 The Government has consulted on "[Community Benefits for Electricity Transmission Network Infrastructure](#)" and it is understood from their response that it intended to introduce voluntary guidance on the appropriate levels and forms of benefits a community could receive as part of a benefits package.
- 1.33 Feedback from the consultation and other research identified that communities would prefer:
- a combination of electricity bill discounts and wider community benefits,
 - a mandatory scheme.

The response by the Government identified that "As a result we are recommending:

- an electricity bill discount for properties located closest to transmission network infrastructure. The scheme design is still under development, but

we estimate this could offer up to £10,000 per property (£1,000 per year, ~£80 per month, over 10 years)

- a wider benefit for the local community of around:
 - £200,000/km (~£320,000/mile) for overhead lines
 - £40,000/km (~£60,000/mile) for underground cables.”

1.34 Part 6 of National Grid Consultation request views on the quality of our (printed and online) consultation materials, our face-to-face consultation events, how we have notified people about our proposals, and anything else related to this consultation.

1.35 Part 7 of the Consultation set out a series of questions relating to climate change.

Question 7a) Given the goal to deliver net zero carbon emissions in the UK by 2050 and the need to facilitate the connection of new renewable generation in the region, to what extent do you agree with the identified need for Chesterfield to Willington (as described on page 16 in the Project Background Document and in the Strategic Options Report)?

1.36 The Council recognises that the goal is to achieve net zero by 2050. It is acknowledged that the evidence from the Climate Change Committee 6th Carbon Budget Electricity is that the use of electricity will double by 2050 and the UK Government has set targets of 50 GW of offshore wind generation by 2030. However, we do not have the expertise to determine whether the new connection from Chesterfield to Willington is necessary. Clearly, from National Grid’s Preferred Strategic Option there are alternatives routes. Further, the impact on the important heritage assets could be minimise by looking at the alternative route set out in the response or by utilising underground cables.

1.37 Part 8 of the Consultation relates to Equality and diversity. There is also provision for a response to an open question *“If you have any other comments on the Chesterfield to Willington consultation or proposals please include them here.”*