

**Bolsover District Council**

**Meeting of the Planning Committee on 15<sup>th</sup> April 2026**

**National Grid 400 kilovolt (kV) overhead electricity line from Chesterfield to Willington (South Derbyshire) - Stage 2 Consultation**

**Report of the Assistant Director: Planning & Planning Policy**

<b>Classification</b>	This report is Public
<b>Report By</b>	Neil Oxby Principal Planning Policy Officer

**PURPOSE / SUMMARY OF REPORT**

National Grid Electricity Transmission (National Grid) is proposing to enhance the East Midlands electricity network by building and operating approximately 60 kilometres (km) of new 400 kilovolt (kV) overhead electricity line from Chesterfield to Willington (South Derbyshire). This report sets out:

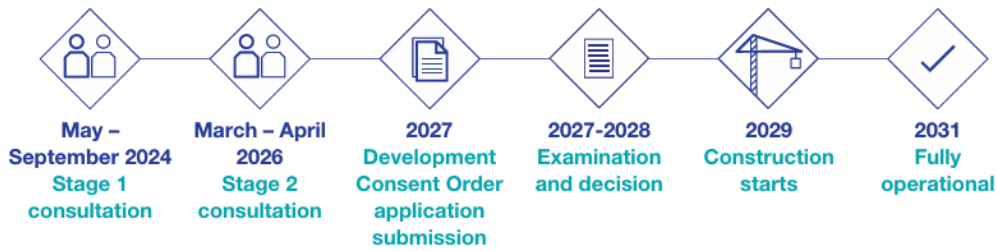
- A summary of National Grid’s Chesterfield to Willington Stage 2 Consultation (Statutory Consultation) which closes on Tuesday 28 April 2026.
- The proposed revised route of the overhead line through Bolsover District.
- Provides information on the potential “Community Benefits” sets out by government guidance in relation to overhead lines.
- References the possibility of entering into a Planning Performance Agreement in respect of the Project.

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**REPORT DETAILS**

**1. Background**

- 1.1 Members will recall that National Grid’s proposal to enhance the East Midlands electricity network by building and operating approximately 60 kilometres (km) of new 400 kilovolt (kV) overhead electricity line from Chesterfield to Willington (South Derbyshire) was reported to the meeting of Planning Committee on 17<sup>th</sup> July 2024.
- 1.2 The scale of the Project means that it is defined as a National Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP). NSIPs are major infrastructure developments which, due to their size and national importance, means that the local planning authority does not consider the application. Under the provisions of The Planning Act 2008, the developer must apply to the Planning Inspectorate for a Development Consent Order (DCO) (Appendix 1). The Project is currently in the pre-application stage of the NSIP planning process. Figure 1 sets out the projected timescale for the Project with key milestones identified.



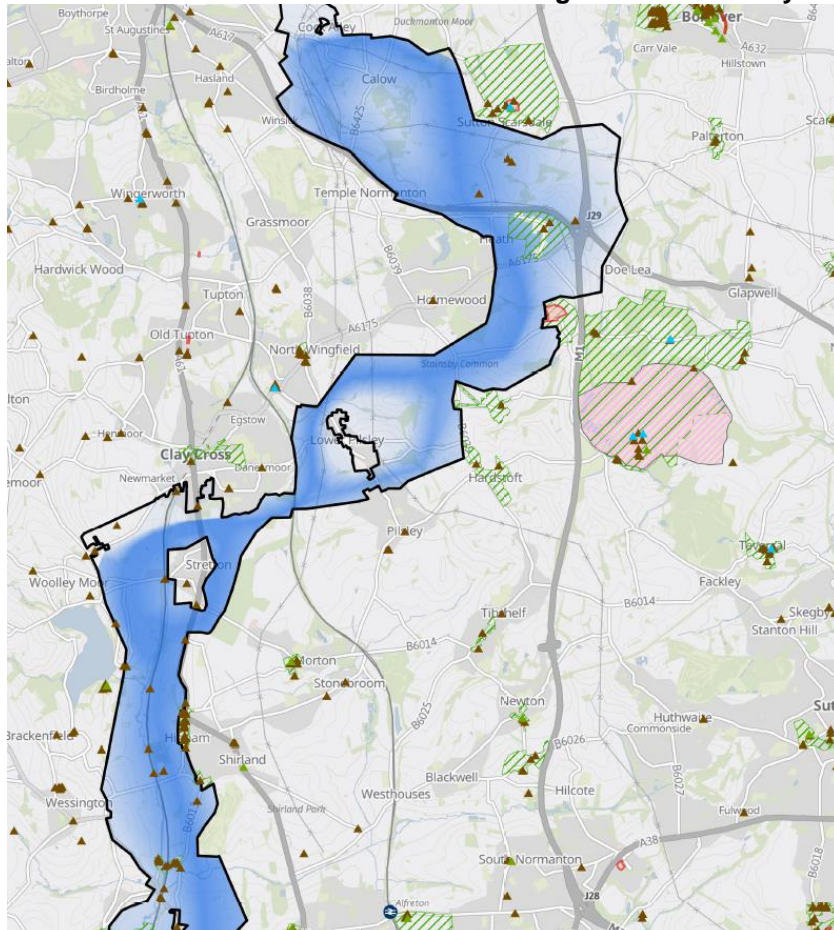
**Figure 1: Project timeline with key milestones**

Source: National Grid Stage 2 Consultation Document, March 2026

- 1.3 The Project is classified as an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) development under the Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017. Therefore, National Grid will be required to undertake an EIA for the Project.
  
- 1.4 At the meeting of the Planning Committee of 17<sup>th</sup> July 2024, the National Grid’s “Emerging Preferred Corridor” for the route was considered. This route was developed by National Grid following environmental and technical assessments to understand areas of most sensitivity to the new infrastructure. The “Emerging Preferred Corridor” had a graduated swathe, Figure 2. The darker blue shaded areas signify where National Grid considers infrastructure placement could potentially be more appropriate within the Corridor.

**Figure 2: National Grid Chesterfield to Willington Stage 1 Consultation Emerging Preferred Corridor Within Bolsover.**

Source: National Grid Chesterfield to Willington Non Statutory Consultation 2024.



- 1.5 As can be seen, the Emerging Preferred Corridor for the overhead line came into Bolsover District to the south of Holmewood and west of Stainsby following a route out of the District to the north west of Hardstoft and north of Pilsley.
- 1.6 The Council's response to the Non Statutory Consultation 2024 set out:
- The importance of the Grade 1 designated heritage assets and the impact on their setting including Hardwick Hall, Hardwick Old Hall, Hardwick Hall Register Park and Gardens, Bolsover Castle, the scheduled monument at Stainsby defended manorial complex and the Conservation Areas located at Hardwick and Rowthorne, Stainsby, Astwith and Hardstoft, seeking:
    - the route of the proposed transmission line to be amended to substantially negate the impact on the heritage assets identified above.
    - if an alternative route was not taken forward, National Grid gives full consideration on how to mitigate the impact of the heritage assets and particular the Grade 1 designated heritage assets of Hardwick Hall and Bolsover Castle.
  - The identified environmental constraints did not take into account Local Wildlife Sites, which need to be considered.
  - In relation to questions on the preference for particular routes the Council was supportive of the route to the north of Pilsley.
  - That underground lines would be appropriate where this is justified by the potential impact on heritage assets.
  - The possible utilisation of National Grid's new T-pylons, which are understood to be lower at 35m high, are sleeker on a single pole and use less land area should be considered for the overhead line.
- 1.7 This response was submitted to National Grid on 16<sup>th</sup> September 2024.

## **2. Details of Proposal or Information**

### **Stage 2 Consultation**

- 2.1 National Grid is now undertaking a Stage 2 Consultation (Statutory) which closes on 28<sup>th</sup> April 2026. The Consultation Report divides the route into six sections of which the Section relevant to Bolsover District are:
- Route Section 1: Chesterfield to Tibshelf.
  - Route Section 2: Tibshelf to Ripley.
- 2.2 The Consultation documents are available on National Grid's [website](#). An [interactive map](#) is available which is designed to allow parties to view the Stage 2 statutory consultation proposals, including the Proposed Route Alignment, indicative pylon positions and other works that will form part of the Project, such as construction accesses and working areas. The

consultation also includes Stage 2 fly-through videos of the route including:

- [Route Section 1 Chesterfield to Tibshelf](#)
- [Route Section 2 Tibshelf to Ripley](#)

2.3 Extensive information is set out as part of the Stage 2 Consultation including a [Preliminary Environmental Information Report \(PEIR\), March 2026](#) which comprises 62 documents and the [Design Development Report March 2026](#). Annex 2 of this document provides a summary of the principle aspects of these documents together with the Preliminary Routing and Siting Study, March 2024 which set out how the Emerging Preliminary Corridors were identified.

2.4 The consultation invites comments on the following aspects in relation to the Route Sections:

- The proposed alignment for the overhead line.
- Proposed pylon locations.
- Proposed modifications to existing lower voltage overhead lines.
- The proposals for construction, including temporary and permanent access roads and tracks, compounds and associated requirements.
- Environmental mitigation and opportunities for Biodiversity Net Gain.
- Any further comments on the proposals in this Route Section.

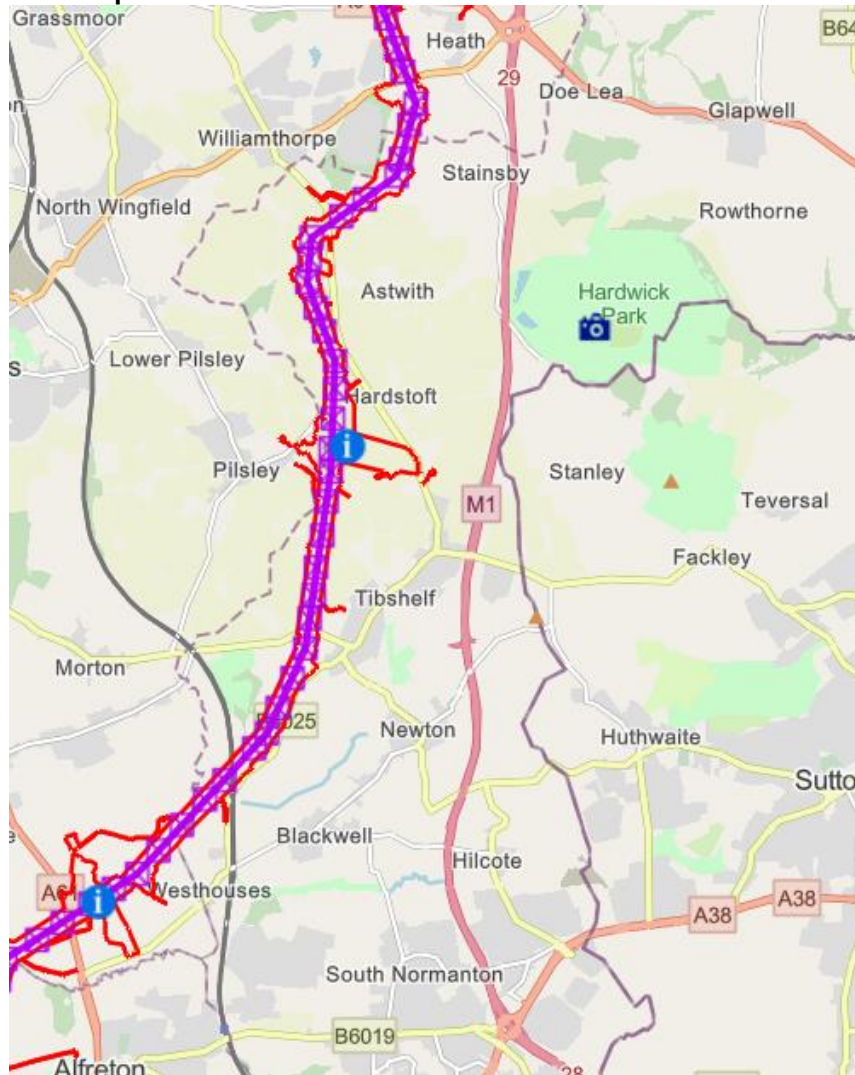
### **Key Changes between the Stage 1 Consultation 2024 and the Stage 2 Consultation**

2.5 The key changes identified by National Grid from the Non Statutory Consultation 2024 are as follows:

- It sets out a more detailed route for the overhead line between Chesterfield and Willington (see Figure 3 below).
- An alternative route option is set out between Astwith and Alfreton, to the east of the area previously identified during the first consultation, avoiding sensitive locations such as the River Amber valley, Ogston Reservoir and nearby listed buildings including Ogston Hall.
- Proposals for a new high voltage substation in the Chesterfield area, located close to the existing Chesterfield Substation.

2.6 Based on this new consultation, the change to the proposed route has substantial implications for Bolsover District as it moves the proposed location of the overhead lines to the east of Pilsley into Bolsover and follows a route that comes close to the west of Tibshelf, and north of Blackwell and Westhouses.

**Figure 3: National Grid Chesterfield to Willington Stage 2 Consultation Proposed Route Alignment Within Bolsover.**  
**Source: National Grid Chesterfield to Willington Statutory Stage 2 Consultation March/April 2026**



2.7 The Stage 2 Consultation document advises that the proposed change of route east into Bolsover District is due to consultation feedback in the Non Statutory Consultation and that National Grid have further considered the North Wingfield / Lower Pilsley and Alfretton area’s local landscape, access issues and mining history. As a result, they consider the new preferred route provides a better balance overall and helps to:

- respond to local concerns about the landscape and access, particularly around the River Amber valley; and
- reduce impacts on the natural environment, views and the wider landscape.

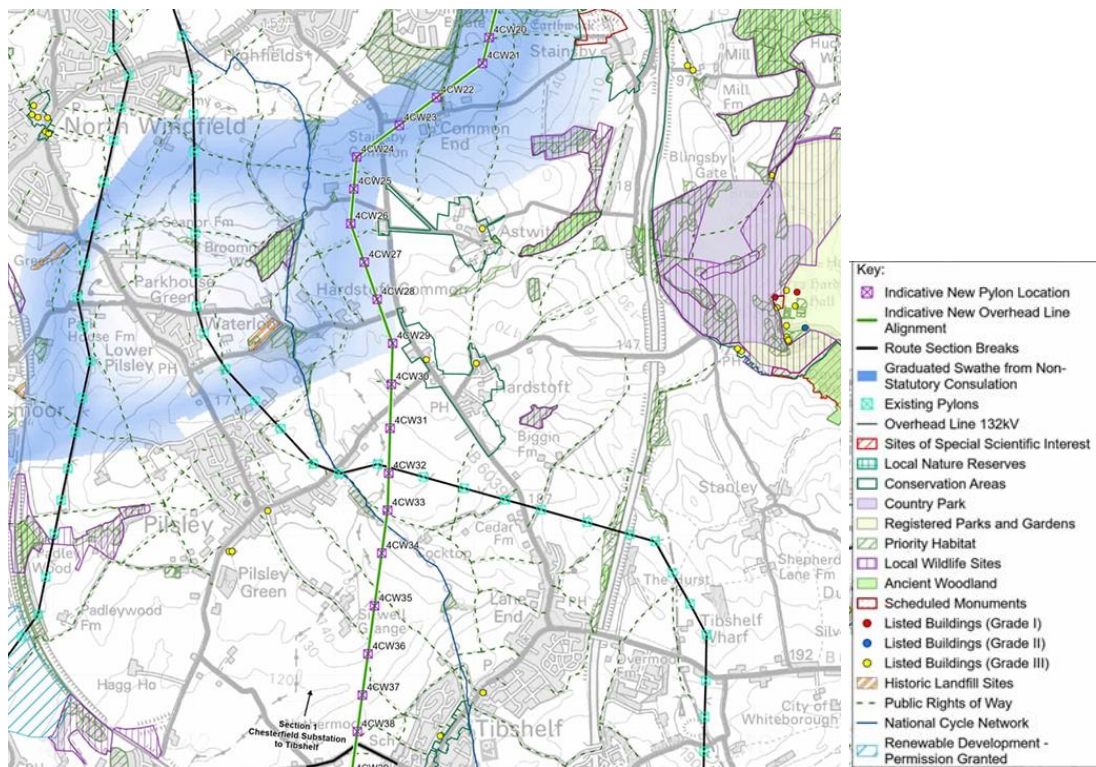
However, National Grid acknowledges that this alternative raises new considerations, including its proximity to important places like Hardwick Hall<sup>1</sup> and these will be carefully considered as the Project develops.

<sup>1</sup> Stage 2 Consultation , March 2026 Page 33 “Proposed route alignment and changes outside the stage 1 corridor.”

## Impacts on Heritage Assets

- 2.8 In relation to Bolsover and Bolsover Castle, the graduated swathe of the Emerging Preferred Corridor 2024 identified an area that extended east of Junction 29 of the M1 Motorway. The refined route is close to Holmewood, which means that it does not cross the M1. Therefore, the overhead line is further away from Bolsover and Bolsover Castle, nevertheless it is considered that this will still have a “significant” visual effect<sup>2</sup> on these heritage assets.
- 2.9 The refined route runs between Heath and Homewood and turns west to the south of Holmewood being located to the northern limit of the Emerging Preferred Corridor 2024. Consequently, it is located away from the Stainsby Conservation Area. However, it is considered the overhead lines still has an impact on heritage assets including the setting of Hardwick Hall.
- 2.10 The revised route instead of going north of Pilsley, as set out in the Stage 1 Consultation, runs south towards Tibshelf, Figure 4. This moves the route east, towards Hardwick Hall, and is likely to be more harmful to the setting of Hardwick Hall and Hardwick Old Hall.

**Figure 4: Emerging Preferred Corridor Stage 1 Consultation 2024 and Proposed Route Stage 2 Consultation 2026. (Askwith to Tibshelf).**  
Source: Design Development Report March 2026.



<sup>2</sup> PEIR Volume 1: Chapter 6 Landscape and Visual Table 6.7:

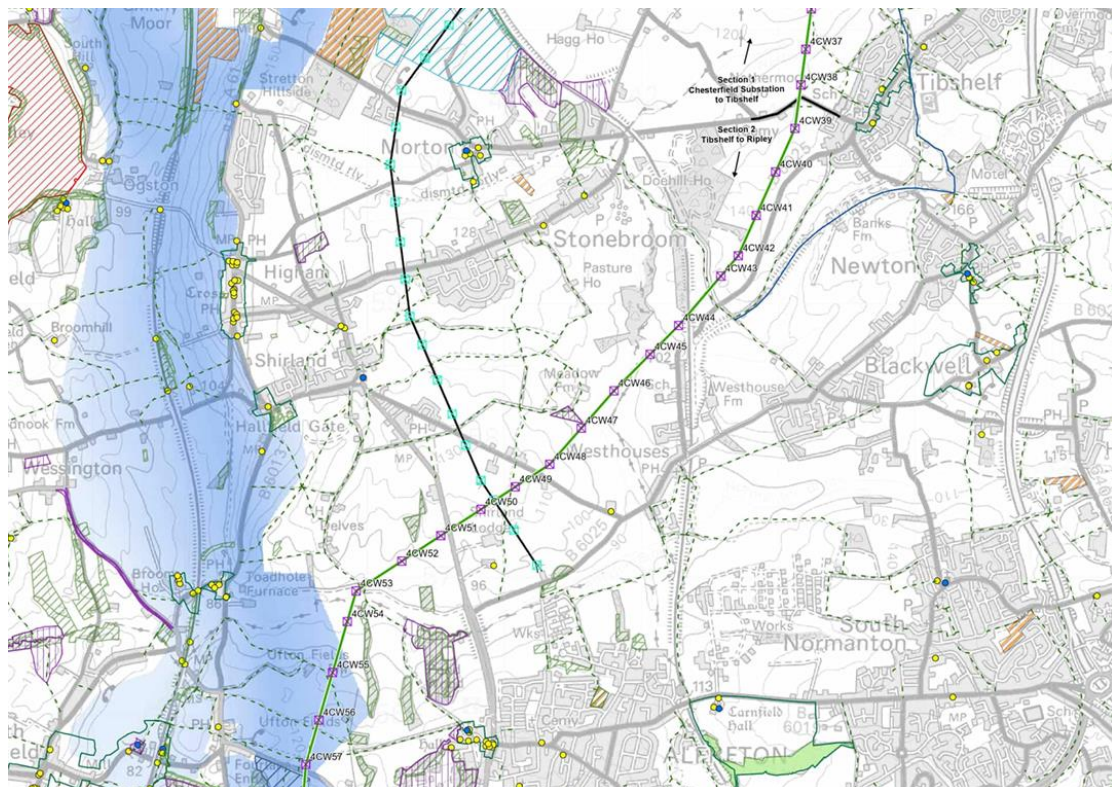
- 2.11 At the time of writing, the detailed PEIR heritage information remains under review by officers in relation to the conservation areas of Stainsby, Astwith, and Hardstoft and the impact on the setting of Harwick Hall. A review is also being undertaken of the landscape aspects of the PEIR.
- 2.12 It is understood that Historic England and the National Trust will be making their own responses to this consultation. However, it is considered that the District Council should state its objection to the impact on our heritage assets, particularly Hardwick Hall and Hardwick Old Hall.

**Impacts on Tibshelf, Blackwell and Westhouses**

- 2.13 The revised route is located in close proximity to Tibshelf and runs to the north of Blackwell and Westhouses, Figure 5. The nearest point to Tibshelf is the Tibshelf Community School whose buildings are approximately 263m from the proposed overhead line.
- 2.14 It is understood that Tibshelf Parish Council and Blackwell Parish Council will be making their own responses to this consultation. However, it is considered that the District Council should state its objection to the impact on our local communities, particularly those in Tibshelf, the north of Blackwell and Westhouses.

**Figure 5 : Emerging Preferred Corridor Stage 1 Consultation 2024 and Proposed Route Stage 2 Consultation 2026. (Tibshelf to west of Alfreton).**

Source: Design Development Report March 2026.

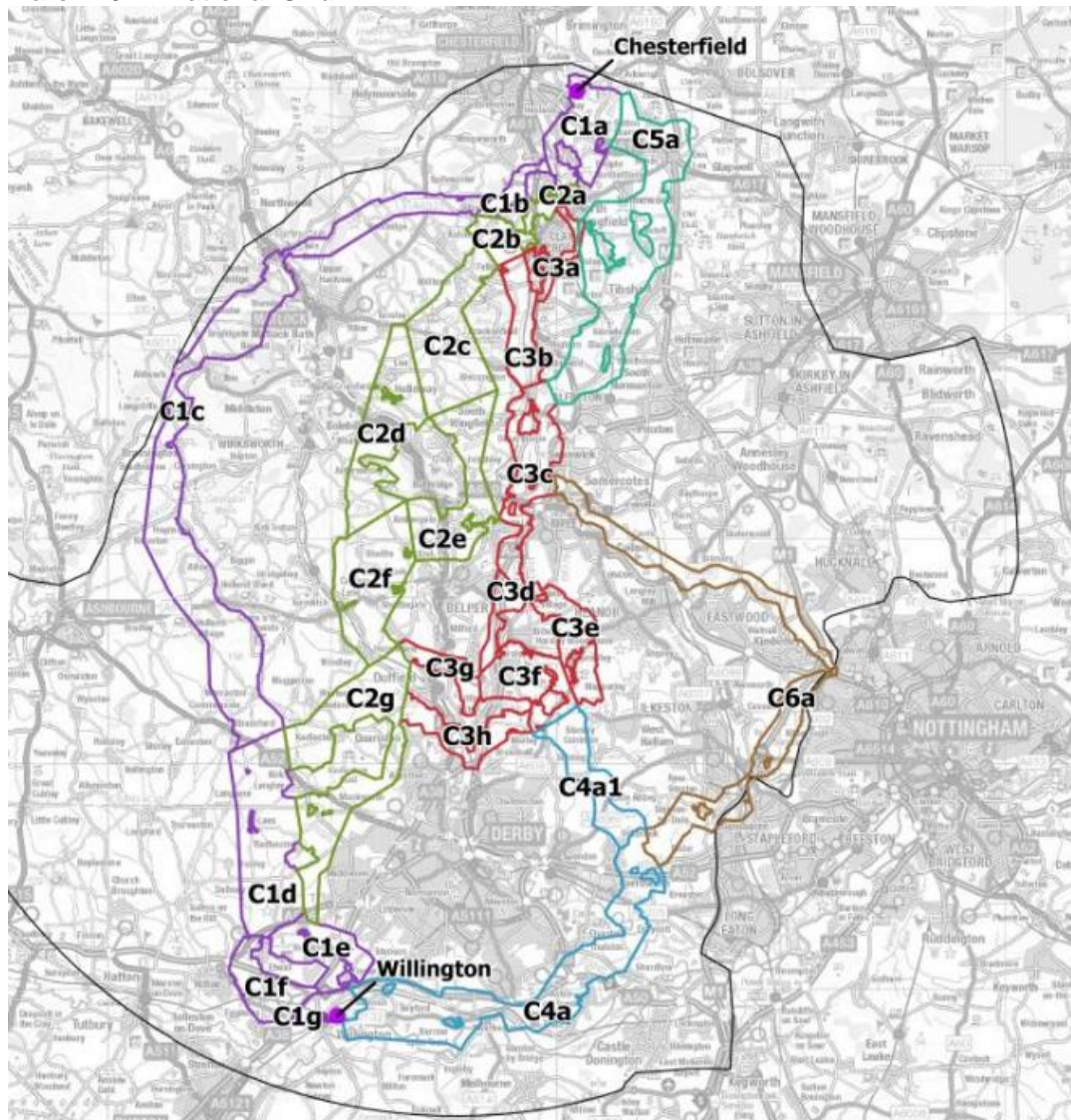


## Potential options for re-routing

- 2.15 Despite the Stage 2 Consultation proposals, it is considered that there remain potential options for re-routing the new overhead electricity line to reduce and mitigate the impact on the District's heritage assets and local communities (see Appendix 2).
- 2.16 Key to this are the initial 6 routes outlined in the Chesterfield to Willington Corridor Preliminary Routeing and Siting Study, March 2024 (see Figure 6 below).

**Figure 6: Corridors 1,2,3,4,5 and 6 considered in The Chesterfield to Willington Corridor Preliminary Routeing and Siting Study March 2024. National Grid. (Corridor 5a outline in green).**

Source: The Chesterfield to Willington Corridor Preliminary Routeing and Siting Study March 2024. National Grid.



- 2.17 This illustrates that there are other options that would be less impactful on Bolsover District, such as the returning to the Corridor 5a which saw the route move closer to Lower Pilsley, Pilsley, Astwith and Hardstoft, including a

potential link to Corridor 3 at Section C3a in the vicinity of Clay Cross, before continuing south.

- 2.18 This option is still considered to have merit, despite the statements made in the National Grid consultation documents, and the Council would welcome reconsideration of the route north of Pilsley and / or rerouting to reduce the harm upon the Districts' heritage assets and local communities.

### **Pylons**

- 2.19 National Grid have set out that for this project their current proposals are based on standard lattice steel pylons. While the proposed location of pylons is identified on the consultation interactive map and supporting drawings the specific height of individual pylons does not appear to be available at this time. However, the Chesterfield to Willington Order illustrative lattice pylon height identifies the following:

- Suspension Pylons - Minimum 50.5 m, Median 56.5 m, Maximum 65.5 m.
- Tension Pylons - Minimum 45.8 m, Median 54.5 m Maximum 60.5 m

National Grid stresses that the final design will be informed by ongoing technical studies, environmental assessments, and feedback from consultations.

- 2.20 National Grid's Design Development Report, March 2026 (DDR), identifies that National Grid's current draft proposals for the Project is still in development, and therefore the detailed design is not fully understood at this stage. The Pylon Options are set out in paragraphs 6.4.4 to 6.4.20. However, it is identified that it is anticipated that the Project will comprise steel lattice pylons in accordance with National Grid's guidance and national planning policy.

### **Community Benefits**

- 2.21 The government has also introduced guidance on how local communities that live near onshore electricity transmission infrastructure developments should benefit from the development of this infrastructure.
- 2.22 [The Community Funds for Transmission Infrastructure: Guidance](#) identifies that engagement is likely to begin at the early stages of a project's development, with funding released as a single lump-sum once a project has secured planning and financing approvals around the time that construction begins.
- 2.23 The Guidance identifies recommended that community funding for an overhead line of £200,000 per KM is provided. For the whole length of proposed scheme this means that £12 million will be available for community projects. The Guidance allows flexibility on when funding is to be spent within a 15 year window from construction starting, but the funding is not index linked.

- 2.24 As part of the consultation National Grid is undertaking a Community Benefit Survey, which is set out as Appendix 3 to this report. It is recommended that the Council consider and respond positively to all benefit areas listed in the Survey.

### **Planning Performance Agreements (PPAs)**

- 2.25 Currently local planning authorities can enter into planning performance agreements with the applicants for a NSIP. This would include funding for an agreed level of service. However, these can be uncertain and lead to lengthy negotiations which can slow an authority's ability to resource work in a timely and effective way.
- 2.26 Acknowledging the limitations of existing funding mechanisms, the Government has committed to enabling local authorities to recover costs for eligible NSIP services provided to applicants or prospective applicants. The Government published a policy paper on 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2026 "Streamlining infrastructure planning: implementation plan" which identifies that the Government proposes to introduce secondary legislation in the Summer 2026 relating to cost-recovery for local authority which host NSIPS.
- 2.27 While changes can be anticipated to the system in relation to local planning authorities costs it is recommended that, if considered necessary or advantageous, officers are authorised to enter into negotiations for a Planning Performance Agreement in respect of the Project.

## **3 Reasons for Recommendation**

- 3.1 The report identifies that decisions on National Significant Infrastructure Projects will be taken at a national level. It summarises the statutory basis and procedures for National Grid's proposal to enhance the East Midlands electricity network through a Development Consent Order.
- 3.2 The statutory Stage 2 Consultation undertaken by National Grid provides an opportunity for the Council to seek to influence the proposed scheme in order to minimise the impact on residents, the local landscape and heritage assets within Bolsover District.
- 3.3 At the time of writing, further examination of other potential route options is being carried out, however, it is anticipated that this will see an emphasis on returning to the route set out in the Emerging Preferred Corridor set out in the Stage 1 Consultation 2024 in order to reduce the impact on the District's heritage assets and local communities.
- 3.4 The National Grid Consultation closes on 28<sup>th</sup> April 2026. The grant of delegated approval enables changes to be made to the proposed representations to reflect any additional information that may become available before the Consultation closed.

#### 4 **Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection**

- 4.1 Not to respond to the National Grid consultation. This alternative option has been rejected as it would not support the Council's efforts to protect the quality of life for residents and businesses, meeting environmental challenges, and enhancing biodiversity.

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#### **RECOMMENDATION**

That Planning Committee:

1. Notes the proposal for a revised route of the new overhead electricity line from Chesterfield to Willington, which is located in part in the District;
2. Agrees the basis of the proposed response to the Consultation that the Council should object to the Stage 2 proposed route due to its harmful impact on the District's heritage assets and local communities and that less harmful route options are supported instead;
3. Agrees that the Council respond positively to all benefit areas listed in the National Grid's Community Benefits Survey;
4. Agrees in principle to entering into a Planning Performance Agreement in respect of the Project should this be necessary or advantageous to the Council;
5. Gives delegated authority to the Interim Strategic Director Economic Growth, in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Planning Committee, to finalise and submit a detailed response to the National Grid Stage 2 Consultation on the basis outlined in the report.

**Approved by Cllr Tom Munro, Portfolio Holder – Growth**

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#### **IMPLICATIONS:**

<b><u>Finance and Risk</u></b> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>Details:</b> <p style="text-align: right;">On behalf of the Section 151 Officer</p>
<b><u>Legal (including Data Protection)</u></b> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>Details:</b> There are no legal implications in responding to the statutory Stage 2 consultation undertaken by National Grid. <p style="text-align: right;">On behalf of the Solicitor to the Council</p>

**Staffing**      Yes       No

**Details:**

On behalf of the Head of Paid Service

**Equality and Diversity, and Consultation**      Yes       No

**Details:** There are no specific direct or indirect negative impacts on any person with a protected characteristic or any group of people with a shared protected characteristic arising from this report.

**Environment**      Yes       No

**Details:** The proposal is identified by National Grid as a requirement to meet the significantly greater demand for electricity arising from renewable sources in order to meeting Government net zero targets. However, there are choices to be made over which route the overhead power lines should take in meeting this requirement in relation to the environment, the impact on the setting of heritage assets and potential socio-economic benefits.

**DECISION INFORMATION:**

**Please indicate which threshold applies:**

**Is the decision a Key Decision?**

A Key Decision is an Executive decision which has a significant impact on two or more wards in the District or which results in income or expenditure to the Council above the following thresholds:

Yes       No

**Revenue (a)** Results in the Council making Revenue Savings of £75,000 or more or **(b)** Results in the Council incurring Revenue Expenditure of £75,000 or more.

(a)       (b)

**Capital (a)** Results in the Council making Capital Income of £150,000 or more or **(b)** Results in the Council incurring Capital Expenditure of £150,000 or more.

(a)       (b)

**District Wards Significantly Affected:**

*(to be significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards in the District)*

Please state below which wards are affected or tick **All** if all wards are affected:

All

<b>Is the decision subject to Call-In?</b> <i>(Only Key Decisions are subject to Call-In)</i>	<b>Yes</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>No</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If No, is the call-in period to be waived in respect of the decision(s) proposed within this report? <i>(decisions may only be classified as exempt from call-in with the agreement of the Monitoring Officer)</i>	<b>Yes</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>No</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>Consultation carried out:</b> <i>(this is any consultation carried out prior to the report being presented for approval)</i>	<b>Yes</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>No</b> <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Leader</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Deputy Leader</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Executive</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>SLT</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Relevant Service Manager</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Members</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Public</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Other</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Portfolio Holder for Growth.

**Links to Council Ambition: Customers, Economy, Environment, Housing**

The project is identified by National Grid as a key aspect in ensuring the electricity can be moved from where it is generated, to where it is needed and meeting the government's targets of achieving net zero by 2050. This is reflective of the Council's commitment to play our part in achieving net zero by 2050. However, there are choices over the route of the transmission line and the proposal has to be considered against the potential negative impact that it may have on heritage assets, which are important to growing our visitor economy.

**DOCUMENT INFORMATION:**

Appendix No	Title
1	National Significant Infrastructure Projects Background Information
2	Summary Information on Potential Routes of the Overhead Transmission Lines Evidence Based Documents from the National Grid Stage 1 Consultation 2024 and the National Grid Stage 2 Consultation 2024.
3	National Grid's Community Benefits Survey

**Background Papers**

*(These are unpublished works which have been relied on to a material extent when preparing the report. They must be listed in the section below. If the report is going to Executive, you must provide copies of the background papers).*