

Minutes

Local Plan Sub-Committee 13th June 2022



Present:

Councillors	Present	Councillors	Present
J Abbott	Yes	D Hume	Apologies
K Bowers	Yes	Mrs I Parker	Yes
G Butland	Yes	Mrs W Scattergood	Yes
J Coleridge	No	Mrs G Spray (Chairman)	Yes
T Cunningham	Yes	P Thorogood	Yes
A Everard	No	J Wrench	Yes

1 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

INFORMATION: The following interests were declared:

Councillor J Abbott declared a Non-Pecuniary Interest in Agenda Item 5 – ‘Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) - East Anglia Green’ as the swathe of land proposed by National Grid for the reinforcement of electricity transmission included the area in which he lived. Councillor Abbott stated that he had taken advice from Council Officers and, as the proposed route affected many other people, he would be able to participate in the debate on the basis that he did not speak specifically about his property.

Councillor T Cunningham declared a Non-Pecuniary Interest in Agenda Item 5 – ‘Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) - East Anglia Green’ as an Elected Member of Essex County Council and, in particular, as the Deputy to the Cabinet Member for Economic Renewal, Infrastructure and Planning, who would be submitting a response to National Grid’s consultation on behalf of Essex County Council.

Councillor Mrs W Scattergood declared a Non-Pecuniary Interest in Agenda Item 5 – ‘Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) - East Anglia Green’ as one of Braintree District Council’s representatives on the Dedham Vale and Stour Valley Advisory Committee, which would be submitting a response to National Grid’s consultation.

Councillor P Thorogood declared a Non-Pecuniary Interest in Agenda Item 5 – ‘Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) - East Anglia Green’ as the Chairman of ‘Kelvedon Against Urban Sprawl’ (KAUS), and as he had advised Mr P Thompson to speak at the meeting during Question Time.

In accordance with the Code of Conduct, Councillors remained in the meeting, unless stated otherwise, and took part in the discussion when the Item was considered.

2 **MINUTES**

DECISION: That the Minutes of the meeting of the Local Plan Sub-Committee held on 17th March 2022 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

3 **QUESTION TIME**

INFORMATION: Four statements were made regarding Agenda Item 5 – ‘Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) - East Anglia Green’. The statements were made by Mr P Thompson as a member of the public and also by Councillor P Euesden, Councillor Mrs D Garrod and Councillor P Schwier in their capacity as Elected Members of Braintree District Council. The statements were made immediately prior to the consideration of the Item.

Principally, these Minutes record decisions taken only and, where appropriate, the reasons for the decisions.

4 **NATIONALLY SIGNIFICANT INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECT (NSIP) - EAST ANGLIA GREEN**

INFORMATION: Consideration was given to a report regarding National Grid Electricity Transmission’s (NGET) proposed 400 Kilovolts (kV) grid reinforcement project between Norwich, Norfolk and Tilbury, Essex known as ‘East Anglia Green’. This was a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP), which was currently subject to non-statutory consultation from 21st April 2022 to 16th June 2022 under Section 42 of the Planning Act 2008. The project affected part of the Braintree District and Members of the Local Plan Sub-Committee were requested to endorse the Council’s proposed response to NGET as set out in Appendix 1 to the report. This response included, where possible, comments which had been submitted by individual District Councillors.

It was proposed that a new 400kV electricity transmission line should be provided over a distance of approximately 180km together with a new 400kV connection substation. The line would predominantly connect overhead via pylons and conductors, but it was also proposed that cabling should be put underground in

some areas. Cable sealing end compounds would also be provided to connect the overhead line with sections of underground cable. The proposed route would enter the Braintree District to the East of Coggeshall and proceed to the West between Coggeshall, Kelvedon and Feering, it would pass Rivenhall Airfield and to the South of Silver End, cross the B1018 close to Crossing Temple and pass to the South of White Notley before exiting the District near Fairstead and Fuller St. The route was delineated in Appendix 2 to the report. It was proposed that within the District the line should be provided predominantly overhead and that it should connect via traditional steel lattice pylons.

Documents and supporting information about the proposed project had been published on National Grid's website. However, as the project was currently at the non-statutory public consultation stage this information represented a broad scope only and more details about the impact of the proposal would be required before the Council could comment on it. Nevertheless, the 'Corridor and Preliminary Routeing and Siting Study Report' had outlined the alternative strategic options which were available, including the provision of an off-shore connection. However, following an appraisal, National Grid had concluded that the project should be provided on-shore. It was proposed that concern should be expressed by the Council that the off-shore option had not been considered in full and that the public had not been given an opportunity to scrutinise National Grid's decision. Furthermore, it was considered that the documents did not provide sufficient information about cabling being placed underground and the impact of doing so.

It was reported that Braintree District Council would not determine the proposed project and that it would be considered instead by the Planning Inspectorate. However, in accordance with the Planning Act 2008 and the Infrastructure Planning (EIA) Regulations 2017 the Council was classified as a 'Host Authority' and it would play an important role in helping to shape and assess the impacts of the proposal. The Council would seek to agree a Planning Performance Agreement (PPA) with NGET, which would reimburse the Council for engaging in the process and enable it to appoint expert consultees in areas such as landscape impact.

It was anticipated that statutory consultation on the proposal would take place in 2023 and that National Grid would undertake extensive community engagement and liaise with 'Host Authorities' prior to the submission of a Development Consent Order to the Planning Inspectorate in 2024. This would be followed by a public examination of the proposals and determination by the Secretary of State by 2026. It was anticipated that work on installing the line would commence in 2027 and that the new line would be in operation with effect from 2030.

DECISION: That Braintree District Council's proposed response to non-statutory consultation on the proposed 'East Anglia Green, Norwich to Tilbury, 400kV grid reinforcement Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project', as set out at Appendix 1 to the Agenda report, be approved and submitted to National Grid Electricity

Transmission, subject to it being amended to request more detailed information about the health impacts of the proposal and, in particular, the difference between the impact of overhead lines and underground cables; and subject to the inclusion of references to local wildlife sites and veteran trees; and to typographical amendments.

The meeting commenced at 6.00pm and closed at 6.53pm.

Councillor Mrs G Spray
(Chairman)