



Department for
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Our ref: 1533u
Your ref: Alford/TW/0228

08 February 2023

Dear Mr Wright,

**SCREENING DECISION BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE UNDER THE
ELECTRICITY WORKS (ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT)
(ENGLAND AND WALES) REGULATIONS 2017 (“THE 2017
REGULATIONS”)**

NAME OF SCHEME: Claxby St Andrew to Mawthorpe Rebuild.

Screening decision for a proposal to rebuild a 11 kilovolt (kv) overhead electricity line of approximately 2,285 metres. The proposal will involve the removal of the existing wooden poles and the installation of new poles of similar structure and size in close proximity to the route of the existing overhead electricity line on land at Claxby St Andrew, Lincolnshire (the “proposed development”).

The proposed development requires Section 37 consent under the Electricity Act 1989 and are subject to the 2017 Regulations.

The Secretary of State has considered the factors set out in Schedule 3 of the 2017 Regulations, together with the information within the supplied documentation (“the Application”) by Western Power Distribution (now known as National Grid Energy Distribution) (“the Applicant”) in relation to the impacts on the environment of the proposed development and the views of East Lindsey District Council (“the LPA”). In reaching his decision, the Secretary of State notes the following factors:

- The proposed development does not fall within Schedule 1 (mandatory EIA);



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- The proposed development falls under Schedule 2 of the 2017 Regulations as the electricity line is to be installed above ground in a sensitive area;
- The proposed development is to replace and upgrade a 3 wire overhead line and supporting wooden poles of similar structure and size along a route in close proximity to the path of the current overhead electricity line;
- The existing line and proposed development are within Skendleby Psalter Banks Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and Lincolnshire Wolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The line also runs close to Claxby Chalk Pit SSSI. Skendleby Psalter Banks SSSI is described as 'unfavourable declining' lowland calcareous grassland. This area of land is both ungrazed and unmanaged. Claxby Chalk Pit SSSI is to the south of the route and is described as 'favourable' lowland calcareous grassland. In addition, the line also falls into the SSSI risk zone for Hopelands Wood SSSI approximately 800m to the south of the line and Willoughby Wood SSSI approximately 1,500m south east of the line. The Ecological Impact Assessment (EIA) and associated survey of the route considers the risk of the works on the environment to be minimal and any potential effects to these sites will be mitigated subject to the implementation of adequate measures as detailed in the EIA, dated May 2019.
- Natural England were consulted about the works and granted their assent which ran from August 2021 and February 2022. As Natural England's assent has expired, the Secretary of State asked the Applicant to seek up to date assent from Natural England prior to the works commencing.
- It is noted that the Applicant contacted Natural England regarding an extension to the assent, via email, on 22 March 2022, meaning that works could not begin until September 2023. Natural England responded on 22 March, stating that if everything remains the same, then they would extend the previous assent later in the year, without the Applicant submitting a new proposal. The Secretary of State notes this and is content with this approach.
- The line and associated works are also taking place in the AONB. The LPA provided views on the proposed development and noted that whilst the development of the site could have implications on the character of the area, the impacts are localised and on a small scale. The LPA therefore decided that the development will not result in significant changes to the AONB.
- Historic England were consulted and raised no concerns about potential archaeological impacts arising from the proposed works (email dated 24 April 2019);
- The Application does not suggest there will be any cumulative adverse effects given that the proposed works are to replace and add a third wire to the existing overhead line which will be in close proximity to the route of



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the existing line and there are no other known proposed or existing developments in the area near the proposed works;

- The LPA considered that having screened the proposed works, the characteristics of the development together with the level of environmental risk, any resultant impact is considered to be limited as the proposal comprises repairs to existing apparatus and equipment. The LPA therefore does not warrant the submission of an Environmental Impact Assessment and does not consider the proposed works to be an EIA development (Form B dated 29 December 2021).

Taking account of the abovementioned factors and information received, the Secretary of State concludes that the proposed works are not EIA development under the 2017 Regulations and do not require a statutory EIA as they are unlikely to have significant effects on the environment due to their nature, location and size. A copy of this letter has been sent to the LPA for information.

Yours sincerely,

John McKenna

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