

DIRECTION BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR ENERGY SECURITY AND NET ZERO (“THE SECRETARY OF STATE”) UNDER SECTION 35 OF THE PLANNING ACT 2008 RELATING TO THE EASTERN GREEN LINK 4 PROJECT

By letter to the Secretary of State received on 2 February 2024, National Grid Electricity Transmission (“the Applicant”) formally requested that the Secretary of State exercise the power vested in her under section 35(1) of the Planning Act 2008 to direct that the England Element of the Eastern Green Link 4, as set out in the Direction request (“the Proposed Development”), be treated as development for which development consent under the Planning Act 2008 is required.

The Secretary of State notes that the Direction request of 2 February 2024 relates to—

- Option 1 a converter station in the Walpole area of Norfolk, England
- Option 2 a converter station in the Walpole area of Norfolk, England and a switching station and a converter station in East Lindsey area of Lincolnshire

The Secretary of State concludes that the Proposed Project is an energy project within the scope of section 35 of the Planning Act 2008.

Noting the above, and further that Boston Borough Council, East Lindsey District Council, Fenland District Council, South Holland District Council, and Lincolnshire County Council, support the request, the Secretary of State is satisfied that—

- The Proposed Project sits within one of qualifying infrastructure fields listed in section 35(2)(a)(i) (energy) and that the Proposed Project will be wholly within England, waters adjacent to England up to the seaward limits of the territorial sea or the Renewable Energy Zone (in relation to which the Scottish Ministers do not have functions);
- The Proposed Project does not fall within the existing definition of a “nationally significant infrastructure project” and therefore it is appropriate to consider use of the power in section 35(1) of the Planning Act 2008; and
- The Applicant’s request constitutes a “qualifying request” in accordance with section 35ZA(11) of the Planning Act 2008.

Having considered the details of the Applicant’s proposals as set out in their letter of 2 February 2024 the Secretary of State concludes that the Proposed Project is nationally significant, for the reasons set out in the Annex below.

The Secretary of State considers that if the details of the Proposed Project change, before submitting any application to the Planning Inspectorate, the Applicant may wish to seek confirmation from the Secretary of State that the development that is the subject of the proposed application is the same as that for which the Direction is hereby given.

The Secretary of State has taken the decision within the conditions as required by sections 35A(2) and (5) of the Planning Act 2008, and issues this Direction accordingly under sections 35(1) and 35ZA of the Planning Act 2008.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE DIRECTS that the Proposed Development is to be treated as development for which development consent is required.

This Direction is given without prejudice to the Secretary of State’s consideration of any application for development consent which is made in relation to the proposed Development.

Signed by

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Wheadon', written in a cursive style.

John Wheadon
Head of Energy Infrastructure Planning
For and on behalf of the Secretary of State for Energy Security & Net Zero

29 February 2024

ANNEX

REASONS FOR THE DECISION TO ISSUE THE DIRECTION

The Secretary of State is of the opinion that the Direction should be issued because—

- The Proposed Project is of national significance, taking into account that it forms part of a 2 Gigawatt transmission reinforcement project that will transmit low carbon electricity from its generation in Scotland to England.
- The Proposed Project could play an important role in enabling an energy system that meets the UK's commitment to reduce carbon emissions and the Government's objectives to create a secure, reliable and affordable supply for consumers.
- Progressing the development through the Planning Act 2008 development consent process would provide the certainty of a single, unified consenting process and fixed timescales.