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Friday 01<sup>st</sup> August 2025

To whom it may concern,

**Subject: Objection to the National Grid Grimsby to Walpole Transmission Project**

We are writing to object to the above proposal under the *Great Grid Upgrade*. While we support the transition to a decarbonised energy system, we believe this specific route and infrastructure design poses unacceptable and unjustified harm to Lincolnshire's landscape, economy, and rural communities.

## **1. Route-Specific Landscape and Amenity Harm**

The proposed overhead lines would introduce **40–50 metre-high pylons** across some of the most open and tranquil countryside in Lincolnshire, cutting through areas of low visual capacity and within view of the **Lincolnshire Wolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)**. This directly conflicts with **National Policy Statement (NPS) EN-1** (Sections 5.9–5.10) and **EN-5** (Section 2.8.9), which require that:

- Developers **minimise visual impacts**
- **Undergrounding** must be considered where appropriate
- Protected or sensitive landscapes must be given special regard

The lack of detailed justification for not routing this project alongside other infrastructure (e.g. Eastern Green Links) or placing sections underground is deeply concerning.

## **2. Cumulative Impacts of Simultaneous NSIPs**

Lincolnshire is already hosting a significant cluster of large-scale energy projects, including:

- **Eastern Green Links 2–5**
- **Offshore wind cable corridors** and converter stations
- **Battery energy storage systems**, solar farms, synchronous condensers

These developments are being built concurrently, resulting in layered and compounded disruption. This violates **EN-1 (Section 4.2.5)**, which requires cumulative impacts to be assessed and mitigated across infrastructure types.

### 3. Agricultural and Economic Harm

This project would carve across some of the UK's finest **Grade 1 and 2 agricultural land**, causing:

- Loss of productive farmland
- Disruption of drainage and machinery access
- Diminished viability of farm operations
- Cumulative impact of multiple energy proposals on farmland and food production

This disregards Government priorities on **food security** and the economic sustainability of rural landscapes. It also conflicts with **HM Treasury's Green Book**, which demands full appraisal of wider social and economic costs.

Local businesses also face a downturn. Tourism in the **Lincolnshire Wolds and coastal areas** depends on open landscapes, scenic views, tranquillity, and family-oriented leisure — all of which are at risk.

Tourism and Food production make up 21% of Lincolnshire's GDP, projects such as this and the associated Energy infrastructure do not contribute towards local authority business rates so would further compound the negative impact on Lincolnshire's economy.

### 4. Transport Pressure and Social Impact

The influx of construction vehicles from this and additional infrastructure construction within the same timeframe, across narrow rural roads will increase:

- **Congestion, road degradation, and safety risks**
- Strain on emergency services and public transport

Plans to accommodate a large temporary workforce in **family-oriented holiday parks** on the coast have raised alarm in communities. Concerns include:

- Disruption to tourism accommodation and income
- Pressure on local amenities and services
- Safety and wellbeing of local residents and visitors
- Community unease about long-term social impacts

There appears to be **no coherent housing or workforce management strategy** disclosed, instead National Grid claim minimal impact.

## 5. Procedural Concerns — Green Book & Gunning Principles

The project appears non-compliant with:

- **The Green Book:** which requires full options appraisal (including undergrounding), value for money, and mitigation of non-monetary harms
- **The Gunning Principles**, which require that:
  - Consultations begin **before decisions are finalised**
  - The public receives **sufficient and accurate information**
  - **Adequate time** is provided to respond meaningfully
  - Feedback is **conscientiously considered**

The lack of a transparent alternatives analysis, vague documentation, and limited responsiveness to local concerns strongly suggests procedural shortcomings.

Consultations have been fraught with errors; at this stage 2 official consultation there was a delay of several days before all documentation was accessible. An incorrect email address on the 'Have Your Say' portion of the website caused confusion and the fly through videos representing the proposed view of the pylon run is wholly unrealistic in its depiction of transparent cable-less pylons as seen from the air.

Stage 2 consultation also refers to ongoing surveys, which highlights the need to extend consultations to allow for all evidence to be presented to the public in order to make informed decisions.

## **6. Specific Local Impact**

The proposed Grimsby to Walpole 400kV overhead transmission line route would have a **devastating and disproportionate impact on the rural parish of Ashby cum Fenby**, a community situated on the periphery of the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB and valued for its tranquillity, historic continuity, and ecological richness.

### **Visual and Landscape Harm:**

The line route as it passes near Ashby cum Fenby would intrude on open countryside with high landscape sensitivity. Towering pylons would dominate key viewpoints from Ashby Lane, Main Road, Barton Street, and Willow Lakes. This visual intrusion is entirely at odds with the unspoilt, agricultural character of the area and would severely degrade views enjoyed by residents and visitors, particularly along bridleways and public rights of way which attract walkers, cyclists, and equestrians.

### **Heritage Setting Impacts:**

St. Peter's Church, a Grade II\* listed building dating back to the medieval period, sits within a historically intact landscape. The proposed line would affect its wider setting, severing visual and emotional connections to its rural surroundings. This undermines not only the significance of the church as a heritage asset but also the spiritual and cultural connection local residents have with the site.

### **Biodiversity and Habitat Disruption:**

The parish features species-rich hedgerows, woodland copses, and watercourses that support protected species such as barn owls, kestrels, pipistrelle bats, and potentially great crested newts and badgers. The introduction of pylons and access corridors would fragment habitats, destroy wildlife corridors, and threaten ecological continuity. Cumulative ecological harm is of particular concern when combined with other NSIPs in the area such as Viking CCS.

### **Community Wellbeing and Livelihoods:**

Residents of Ashby cum Fenby are highly sensitive to changes in their environment. The anticipated visual blight, construction noise, and perceived health risks from EMFs would damage mental wellbeing, disrupt local amenity use, and reduce the perceived quality of life. The impact on property values, tourism appeal, and local economic resilience has not been sufficiently considered or mitigated.

**Cumulative Development Burden:**

This parish is at risk of becoming a corridor for overlapping energy infrastructure. The proposed route would compound regional development pressure and transform Ashby cum Fenby from a tranquil, cohesive rural village into an industrialised buffer zone. This violates planning policy safeguards under NPS EN-1 and EN-5 which call for special regard to be given to sensitive landscapes and cultural heritage settings.

**Lack of Alternatives Justification:**

No robust justification has been provided as to why undergrounding has been ruled out for this sensitive segment, other than cost. The absence of transparent alternatives appraisal is a serious omission from National Grid's Stage 2 consultation.

In conclusion, **Ashby cum Fenby Parish Council objects unequivocally to the proposed routing of overhead lines near the village.** It calls for urgent reconsideration of the design, including full undergrounding in proximity to the parish or realignment away from sensitive heritage, ecological and landscape receptors.

Yours sincerely,

**Ashby cum Fenby Parish Council**