

Our Ref: MV/ 15B901605

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18 December 2023



Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council
Sandwell_LocalPlan@sandwell.gov.uk
via email only

Dear Sir / Madam
**Draft Regulation 18 Sandwell Local Plan – Consultation
November – December 2023
Representations on behalf of National Grid**

National Grid Electricity Transmission has appointed Avison Young to review and respond to local planning authority Development Plan Document consultations on its behalf. We are instructed by our client to submit the following representation with regard to the current consultation on the above document.

About National Grid Electricity Transmission

National Grid Electricity Transmission plc (NGET) owns and maintains the electricity transmission system in England and Wales. The energy is then distributed to the electricity distribution network operators, so it can reach homes and businesses.

National Grid no longer owns or operates the high-pressure gas transmission system across the UK. This is the responsibility of National Gas Transmission, which is a separate entity and must be consulted independently.

National Grid Ventures (NGV) develop, operate and invest in energy projects, technologies, and partnerships to help accelerate the development of a clean energy future for consumers across the UK, Europe and the United States. NGV is separate from National Grid's core regulated businesses. Please also consult with NGV separately from NGET.

Proposed development sites crossed or in close proximity to NGET assets:

Following a review of the above Development Plan Document, we have identified that one or more proposed development sites are crossed or in close proximity to NGET assets. Details of the sites affecting NGET assets are provided below.

Development Plan Document Site Reference	Asset Description
SEC1-9 Roway Lane, Oldbury	VT ROUTE TWR (019 - 036): 400Kv Overhead Transmission Line route: KITWELL - OCKER HILL
SEC1-7 Site of Bilport Lane, Wednesbury	VT ROUTE TWR (001A - 016): 400Kv Overhead Transmission Line route: BERKSWELL - OCKER HILL
SM2 (SA-199) Lion Farm, Oldbury	YJ ROUTE: 275Kv Overhead Transmission Line route: KITWELL - OCKER HILL

275Kv Underground Cable route: KITWELL 275KV S/S	
70-74 Crankhall Lane	VT ROUTE TWR (001A - 016): 400Kv Overhead Transmission Line route: BERKSWELL - OCKER HILL

A plan showing details of the site locations and details of NGET assets is attached to this letter. Please note that this plan is illustrative only.

Without appropriate acknowledgement of the NGET assets present within the site, these policies should not be considered effective as they cannot be delivered as proposed; unencumbered by the constraints posed by the presence of NGET infrastructure.

We propose modifications to the above site allocations and/or policies to include wording to the following effect:

SEC1-9 Roway Lane, Oldbury

"The development will be developed with the following site-specific criteria

A strategy for responding to the NGET overhead transmission lines present within the site which demonstrates how the NGET Design Guide and Principles have been applied at the masterplanning stage and how the impact of the assets has been reduced through good design."

Please see attached information outlining further guidance on development close to NGET assets.

NGET also provides information in relation to its assets at the website below.

- <https://www.nationalgrid.com/electricity-transmission/network-and-infrastructure/network-route-maps>

Utilities Design Guidance

The increasing pressure for development is leading to more development sites being brought forward through the planning process on land that is crossed by NGET infrastructure.

NGET advocates the high standards of design and sustainable development forms promoted through national planning policy and understands that contemporary planning and urban design agenda require a creative approach to new development around high voltage overhead lines and other NGET assets.

Therefore, to ensure that Policy SDS1 Development Strategy is consistent with national policy we would request the inclusion of a policy strand such as:

"p. take a comprehensive and co-ordinated approach to development including respecting existing site constraints including utilities situated within sites."

Further Advice

NGET is happy to provide advice and guidance to the Council concerning their networks. If we can be of any assistance to you in providing informal comments in confidence during your policy development, please do not hesitate to contact us.

To help ensure the continued safe operation of existing sites and equipment and to facilitate future infrastructure investment, NGET wishes to be involved in the preparation, alteration and review of plans and strategies which may affect their assets. Please remember to consult NGET on any Development Plan Document (DPD) or site-specific proposals that could affect NGET's assets. We would be grateful if you could check that our details as shown below are included on your consultation database:

Matt Verlander, Director

nationalgrid.uk@avisonyoung.com

Avison Young
Central Square South
Orchard Street
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE1 3AZ

Tiffany Bate, Development Liaison Officer

box.landandacquisitions@nationalgrid.com

National Grid Electricity Transmission
National Grid House
Warwick Technology Park
Gallows Hill
Warwick, CV34 6DA

If you require any further information in respect of this letter, then please contact us.

Yours faithfully,

**Matt Verlander MRTPI
Director**

For and on behalf of Avison Young

NGET is able to provide advice and guidance to the Council concerning their networks and encourages high quality and well-planned development in the vicinity of its assets.

Developers of sites crossed or in close proximity to NGET assets should be aware that it is NGET policy to retain existing overhead lines in-situ, though it recognises that there may be exceptional circumstances that would justify the request where, for example, the proposal is of regional or national importance.

NGET's '*Guidelines for Development near pylons and high voltage overhead power lines*' promote the successful development of sites crossed by existing overhead lines and the creation of well-designed places. The guidelines demonstrate that a creative design approach can minimise the impact of overhead lines whilst promoting a quality environment. The guidelines can be downloaded here: <https://www.nationalgridet.com/document/130626/download>

The statutory safety clearances between overhead lines, the ground, and built structures must not be infringed. Where changes are proposed to ground levels beneath an existing line then it is important that changes in ground levels do not result in safety clearances being infringed. National Grid can, on request, provide to developers detailed line profile drawings that detail the height of conductors, above ordnance datum, at a specific site.

NGET's statutory safety clearances are detailed in their '*Guidelines when working near National Grid Electricity Transmission assets*', which can be downloaded here: www.nationalgridet.com/network-and-assets/working-near-our-assets

How to contact NGET

If you require any further information in relation to the above and/or if you would like to check if NGET's transmission networks may be affected by a proposed development, please visit the website: <https://lsbud.co.uk/>

For local planning policy queries, please contact: nationalgrid.uk@avisonyoung.com