

Our Ref: MV/ 15B901605

01 November 2024



Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council

[Sandwell\\_localplan@sandwell.gov.uk](mailto:Sandwell_localplan@sandwell.gov.uk)**via email only**

Dear Sir / Madam

**Sandwell Local Plan Regulation 19 Consultation  
September – November 2024  
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
Site of Bilport Lane, Wednesbury	VT ROUTE TWR (001A - 016): 400Kv Overhead Transmission Line route: BERKSWELL - OCKER HILL
Lion Farm, Oldbury	YJ ROUTE: 275Kv Overhead Transmission Line route: KITWELL - OCKER HILL
Roway Lane, Oldbury	VT ROUTE TWR (019 - 036): 400Kv Overhead Transmission Line route: KITWELL - OCKER HILL

**Portway Road Substation  
Open Space**

**Oldbury Substation and surrounding NGET land  
ownership**

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:

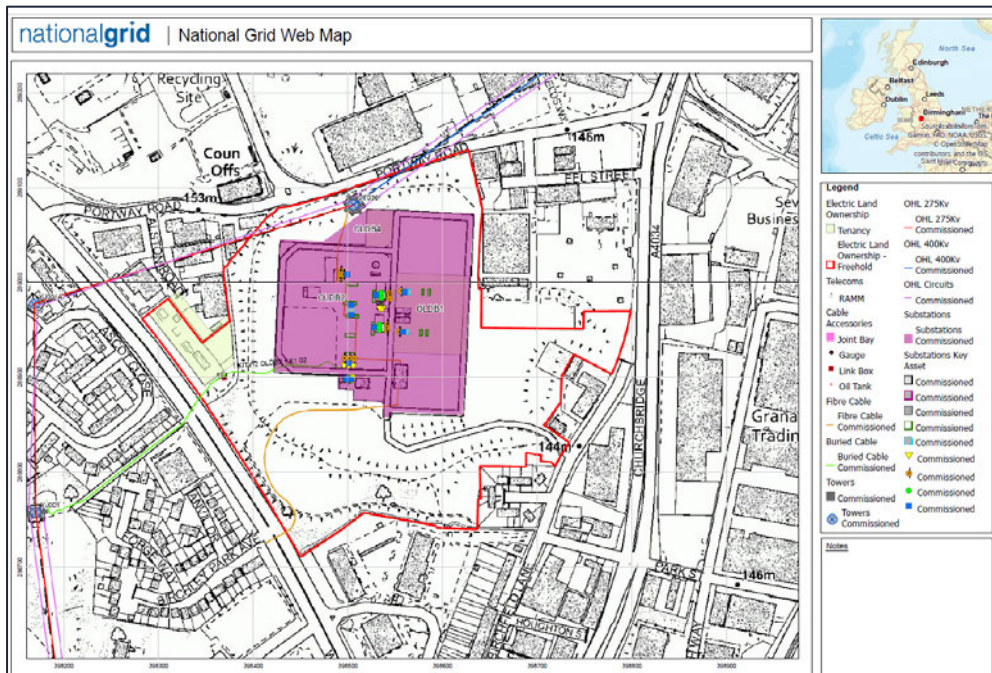
*“x. The site will be developed with the following site-specific criteria:*

*x. 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>

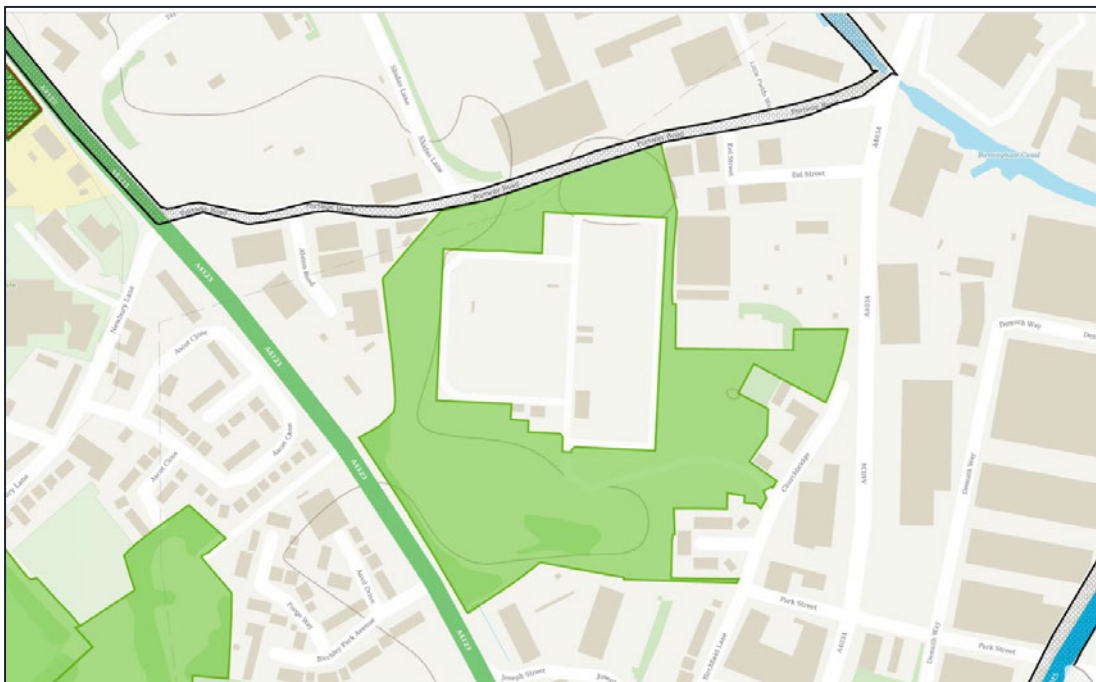
**Proposed Open Space Designation**



**Figure 1: NGET Operational Land and Land Ownership**

Further to the abovementioned conflicting site allocations, it has been identified that the Local Plan makes designations for new areas of open space. Policy SHW4 Open Space and Recreation includes a designation for Portway Road Substation Open Space (see Figure 1). NGET is currently investing in the network of the future to connect more lower carbon electricity to the network, which is crucial for the nation to achieve national net zero ambitions. NGET has a statutory duty to offer generation and demand customers connections to the network in an economic and efficient way.

There has been a substation at Oldbury for many years and it is an important node on the network to enable electricity to be transmitted securely and reliably. Since the acquisition of the land at Oldbury substation, the land outside of the electrical fence line has been retained in the long-term interests of our undertaking and is regarded as “operational land”. This land should therefore not be classified as open space and should be safeguarded for NGET’s operational use.



**Figure 2: Open Space Designation No. 2032 Portway Road Substation**

This designation is categorised as amenity open space and measures 6.95ha. The designation does not appear in the adopted Local Plan, with the area comprising white land. NGET is not able to release land immediately adjacent to operational substations as the land needs to be safeguarded to allow for any potential development in the future. Whilst there are no immediate plans to extend the substation, NGET needs to address the future particularly with the move to net zero and decarbonisation of the energy network.

Demand for electricity is expected to rise as the way we power our homes, businesses and transport changes. As the nation moves towards net zero, the fossil fuels that once powered our economy will be replaced with sources of low-carbon electricity, such as offshore wind farms.

The UK Government has committed to reach net zero emissions by 2050. This means achieving a balance between the greenhouse gases put into the atmosphere and those taken out. Decarbonising the energy system is vital to this aim.

NGETs infrastructure projects in England and Wales will support the country's energy transition and make sure the grid is ready to connect to more and more sources of low carbon electricity generated in Britain.

The way we generate electricity in the UK is changing rapidly. This means we need to build new infrastructure and make upgrades to the grid to bring this clean, green energy from where it's generated to where it's needed by homes and businesses.

### **Further Advice**

In summary, NGET must object to the proposed site allocations without appropriate acknowledgement and protection of the NGET assets present within these sites in line with NGET Design Guide and Principles. In addition, NGET object to the proposed designation of open space for the land surrounding Oldbury substation. This land is privately owned and may be required for low carbon energy purposes and National Grid's operational use to meet the country's net zero targets and meet the increasing demand for electricity to power our homes, businesses and transport.

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**

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Avison Young  
Central Square  
Forth Street  
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NE1 3PJ

**Tiffany Bate, Development Liaison Officer**

[box.landandacquisitions@nationalgrid.com](mailto: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.nationalgrid.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.

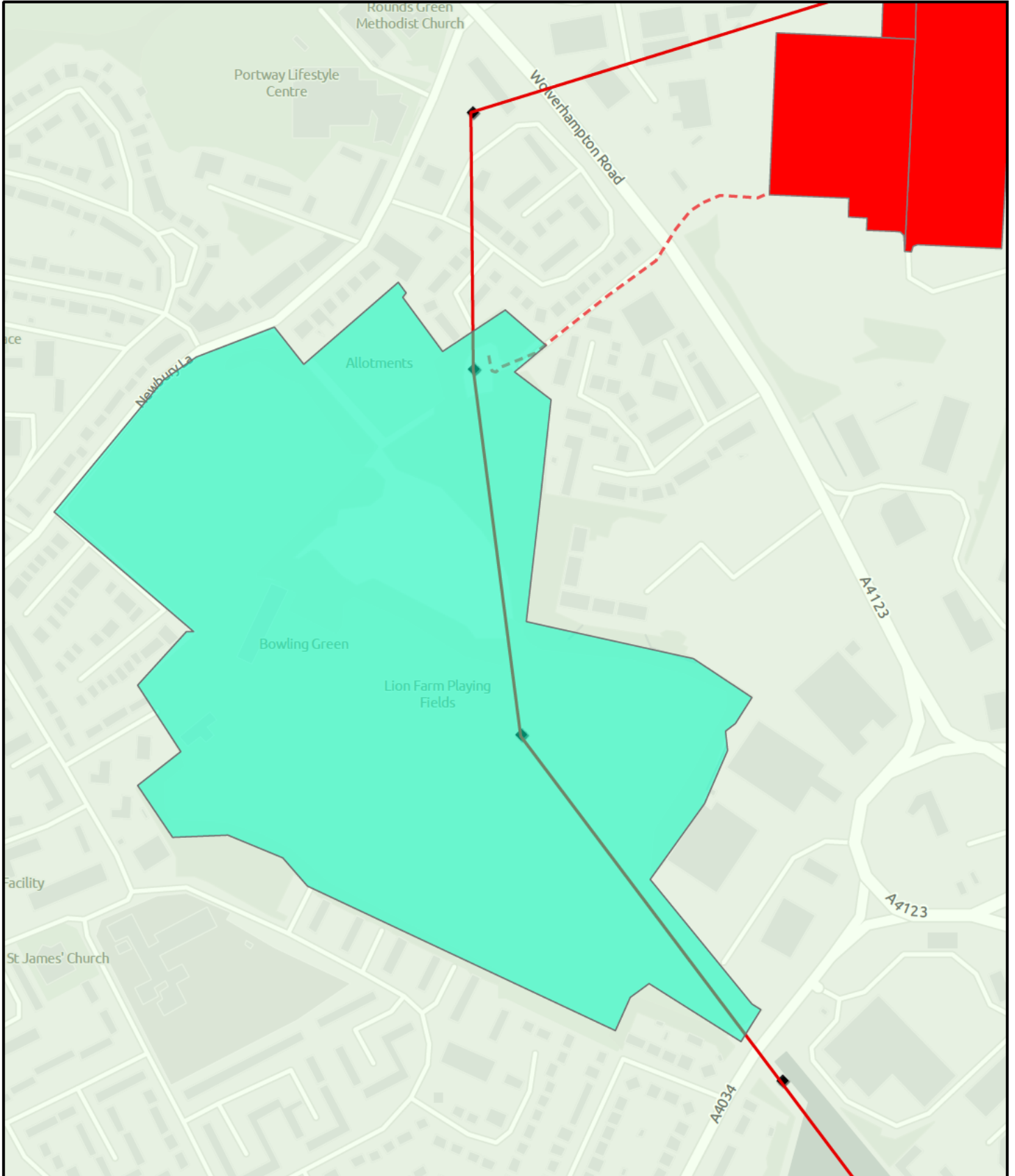
NGET's statutory safety clearances are detailed in their *'Guidelines when working near National Grid Electricity Transmission assets'*, which can be downloaded here: [www.nationalgrid.com/network-and-assets/working-near-our-assets](http://www.nationalgrid.com/network-and-assets/working-near-our-assets)

#### 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](mailto:nationalgrid.uk@avisonyoung.com)

# Lion Farm, Olbury



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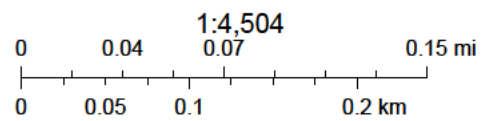
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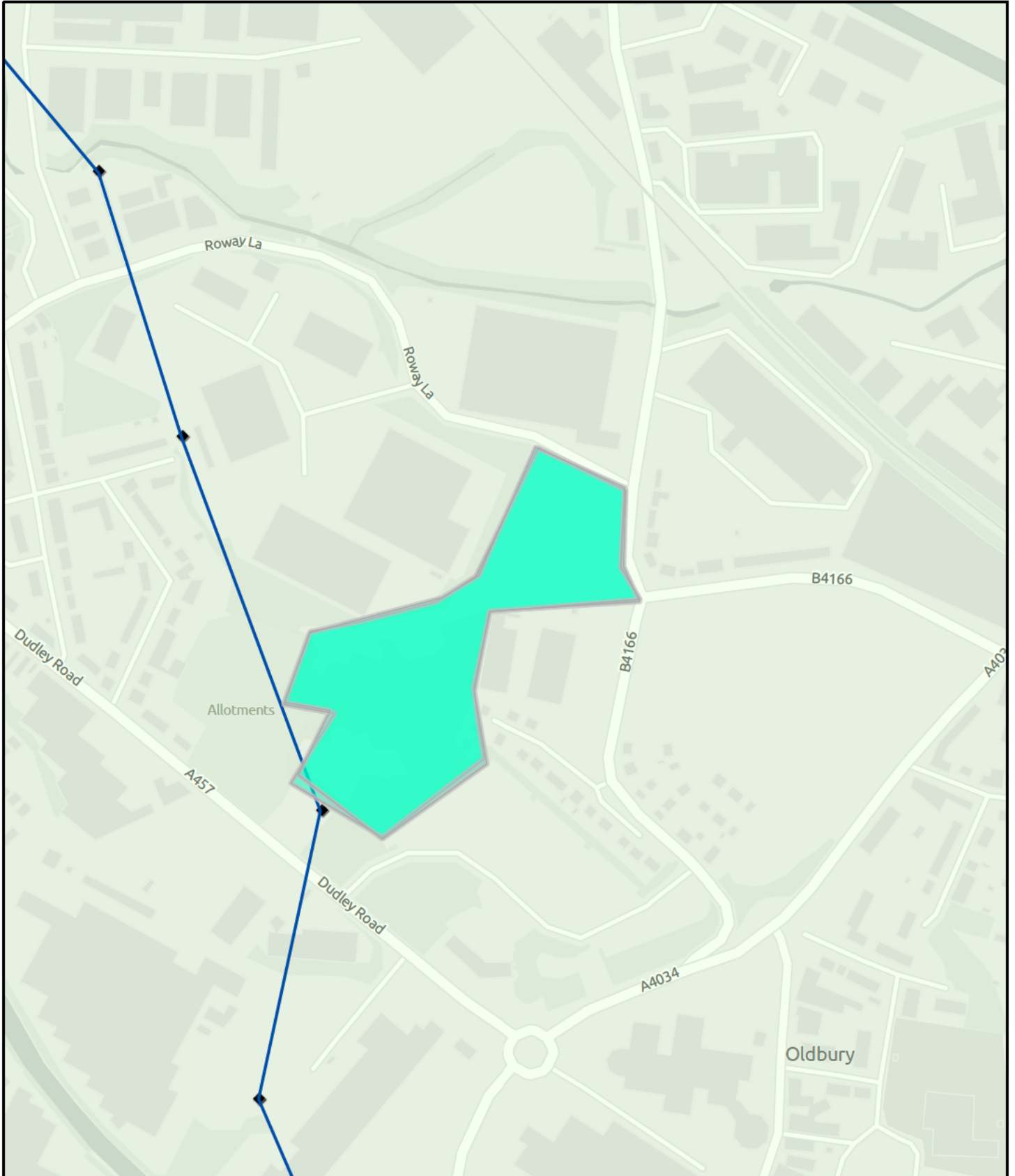
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# Roway Lane, Oldbury



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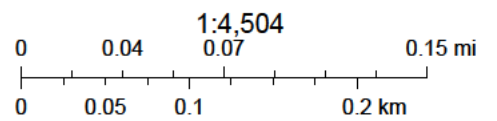
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400

Electric\_Assets\_1587

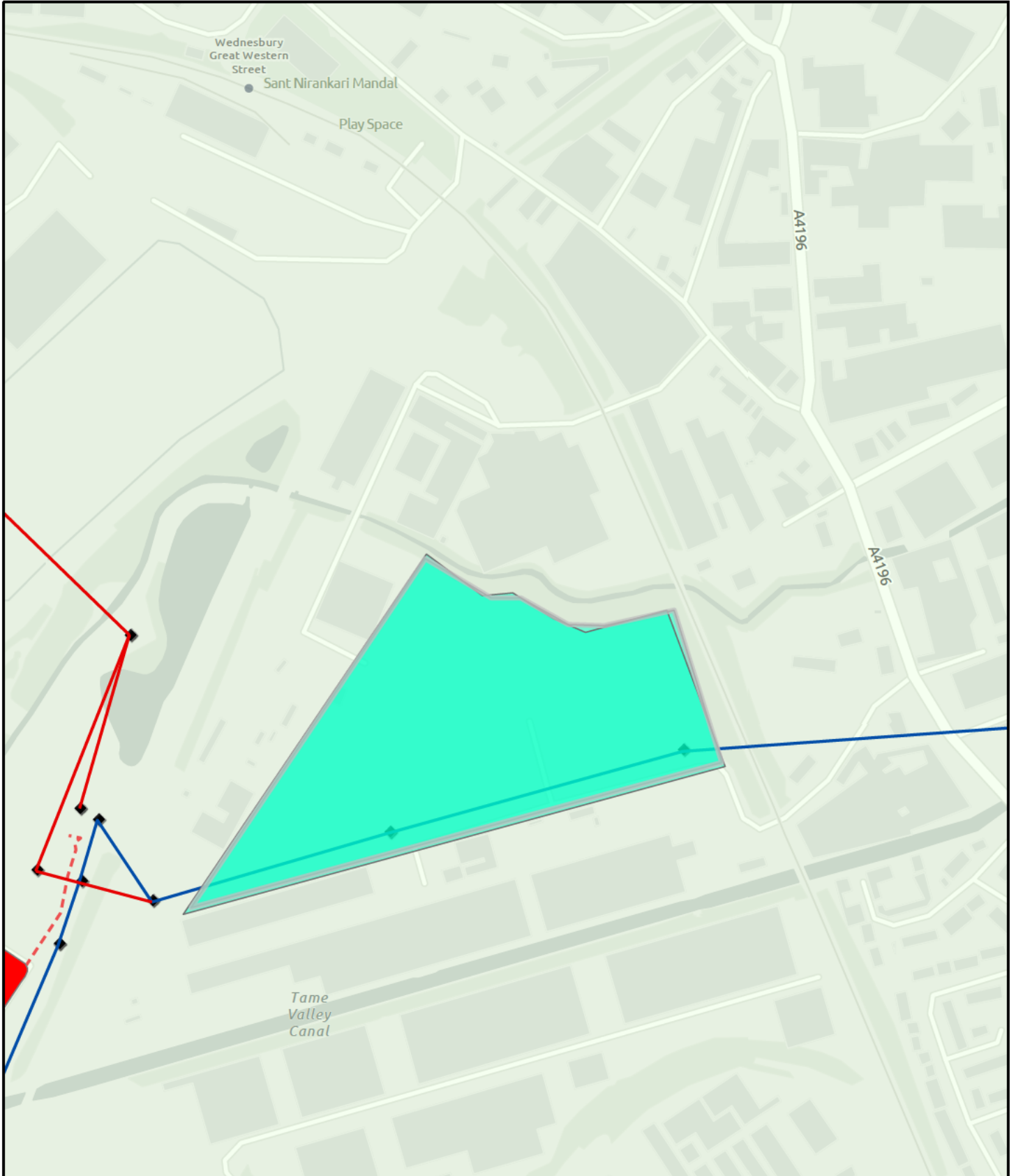
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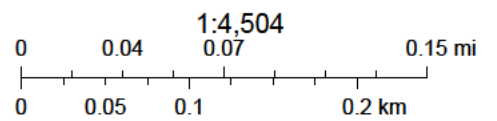


# Site off Bilport lane, Wednesbury



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- Electric\_Assets\_4020
- 400
- 275
- Electric\_Assets\_1587
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