

Chairman, councillors.

Our Residents, communities, businesses and affected ward councillors are now grappling with the unwanted intrusion of the National Grid proposal to run a 400kV overhead transmission from Grimsby to Walpole. This will affect the whole of the South and East Lincolnshire Partnership area and will, in my view, potentially destroy a landscape in East Lindsey that has taken millennia to shape. The proposed route, with supporting sub-stations, will cut a swathe between our coast and the Lincolnshire Wolds.

It has the potential to scar and destroy vistas that exist between our Wolds and the coast. Communities and residents may well be subjected to an industrial landscape not of their choice or making. As an Executive, we are deeply concerned that the proposed route of the overhead transmission line will detrimentally impact on a hospitality and tourism industry that attracts 4.48 million visitors per year and in 2022 was worth £824 million to the local economy.

It is perverse that a scheme that aims to deliver the government's net zero targets could itself harm an environment that should be protected for the benefit of residents and visitors alike. We fully recognise the need to have energy security and the need to distribute energy to where it is needed but the cost of doing so should not be a burden on host communities or be detrimental to the local economy.

As a Council we will encourage residents to complete the National Grid consultation. This is the start of a long process and as Leader, I will make sure that our planning officers have the necessary resource to fully understand the policy issues and challenges that this proposal raises. It is critical that the environmental impact of this is fully appraised along with the economic impact.

As Leader, I know that affected ward councillors will want to represent their residents' best interests and to facilitate this, the Portfolio Holder for Planning will use the next Planning Policy meeting to brief councillors on how we, as the Local Planning Authority, will respond to the application as consultees. The meeting will also be used as an opportunity for ward councillors to lodge their comments with planning officers on the current consultation. It should be noted that National Grid intend to hold further consultations as they refine their plans.

ELDC has a Local Plan that recognises the need to protect the setting of the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB, residential amenity and the local economy when considering large scale transmission applications.

Strategic Policy 27 of the Local Plan also has a presumption that any connecting cables will be placed underground.

National Grid must be under no illusion....the Executive board and by extension, this Council, cannot support their current proposal for overhead transmission cables running the length of East Lindsey.

We would urge National Grid to consider;

~ all alternative routes including off shore

~the under-grounding of cables

~all available technologies

~the lessons learnt from other areas of the country where overhead transmission lines have not been welcomed.

We are also of the view that National Grid should reconsider their proposal altogether and work with other developers who will be making applications to route inter-connectors in the east of England. We must have an integrated approach to such significant infrastructure projects. We are well placed as a sub regional partnership to be part of such a discussion with our MPs and interested parties across Lincolnshire and East Anglia.

Cllr Craig Leyland
Leader
East Lindsey District Council