

Community invited to join study on reducing visual impact of existing power lines in part of the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Local people invited to help with study on reducing visual impact of overhead electricity lines in High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)

13 Feb 2015

- **Public event scheduled for Tuesday 24 February in the St Valery Room, Battle Memorial Hall, Battle**
- **National Grid and High Weald AONB collaborating as part of the Visual Impact Provision project**

Local residents are being invited to help with a study into reducing the visual impact of pylons in High Weald AONB.

In November 2014, National Grid identified a section of overhead power line near Battle Abbey, the site of the 1066 Battle of Hastings, as having a significant visual impact on the landscape. The company is now working with the High Weald AONB Partnership to investigate whether it's possible to reduce the impact of this power line in the AONB.

As part of this initiative National Grid is inviting local people to share their knowledge of the area and help influence their assessments of these lines. A public event is planned for **Tuesday 24 February** in Battle, which will give local people chance to share their views and local knowledge.

Members of the project team will be on hand to answer questions and provide additional information about the project.

The event will take place **from 2pm until 8pm** at:

- **The St Valery Room, Battle Memorial Hall, High Street, Battle, TN33 0AQ**

The information gathered will be used by National Grid as it investigates whether this section of line in the AONB could be part of the final shortlist of projects to benefit from the Visual Impact Provision* project. This is a major initiative to reduce the visual impact of existing energy transmission lines in protected areas of Great Britain; it will make use of a £500 million allowance made available by energy regulator Ofgem until 2021.

Sally Marsh, Co-Director of the High Weald AONB partnership said:

"We are delighted with this new collaboration between the National Grid and Protected Landscape Partnerships across England and Wales. The High Weald is an outstanding medieval landscape, facing significant development pressure, and we welcome this opportunity to work with local communities to enhance the setting of an iconic historic site."

Hector Pearson, National Grid VIP Project Manager said: "National Grid's electricity network is vital to our way of life, but this project provides a real opportunity to help reduce its impact on treasured landscapes like the High Weald AONB. These events are the first step in gathering essential information to help us to consider how we could potentially reduce the visual impact of these overhead lines and whether we could take this further forward."

The High Weald AONB is one of eight areas across England and Wales identified which could benefit from the Visual Impact Provision project. A Stakeholder Advisory Group made up of organisations dedicated to protecting precious landscapes across England and Wales will decide which locations from this final shortlist will be taken forward for feasibility work and potential engineering projects.

Residents who are unable to attend the drop-in session can still contribute to the research and register for project updates on the website www.nationalgrid.com/vip

National Grid is one of the largest investor-owned energy companies in the world and has been named Responsible Business of the Year 2014 by Business in the Community. We own and manage the grids that connect people to the energy they need, from whatever the source. In Britain and the north-eastern states of the US we run systems that deliver gas and electricity to millions of people, businesses and communities.

In Britain, we run the gas and electricity systems that our society is built on, delivering gas and electricity across the country. In the North Eastern US, we connect more than seven million gas and electric customers to vital energy sources, essential for our modern lifestyles.

National Grid in the UK:

- We own the high-voltage electricity transmission network in England and Wales, operating it across Great Britain
- We own and operate the high pressure gas transmission system in Britain
- Our gas distribution business delivers gas to 10.9 million homes and businesses
- We also own a number of related businesses including LNG importation, land remediation and metering
- National Grid manages the National Gas Emergency Service free phone line on behalf of the industry - 0800 111 999 (all calls are recorded and may be monitored).
- Our portfolio of other businesses is mainly concerned with infrastructure provision and related services where we can exploit our core skills and assets to create value. These businesses operate in areas such as Metering, Grain LNG Import, Interconnectors and Property. National Grid Carbon Ltd is a wholly owned subsidiary of National Grid. It undertakes Carbon Capture Storage related activities on behalf of National Grid.

National Grid in the US:

- National Grid delivers electricity to approximately 3.4 million customers in New England and upstate New York
- We own 3.8 gigawatts of contracted electricity generation, providing power to over one million LIPA customers
- We are the largest distributor of natural gas in north-eastern U.S., serving approximately 3.5 million customers in New York, Massachusetts and Rhode Island.

Find out more about the energy challenge and how National Grid is helping find solutions to some of the challenges we face at www.nationalgridconnecting.com

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Notes for editors

***About Visual Impact Provision**

All electricity transmission owners are funded by a price control mechanism which is agreed with and set by Ofgem, the electricity and gas markets regulator. Ofgem has agreed a set of price controls and incentives for the period from April 2013 to March 2021. The new price controls and incentives include a provision of £500 million to mitigate the visual impact of existing electricity infrastructure in nationally protected landscapes in Great Britain.

For National Grid, which is the electricity transmission owner in England and Wales, this means considering the visual amenity of our existing infrastructure in National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs).

Notes to Editors:

National Grid is pivotal to the energy systems in the UK and the north eastern United States. We aim to serve customers well and efficiently, supporting the communities in which we operate and making possible the energy systems of the future.

National Grid in the UK:

- We own and operate the electricity transmission network in England and Wales, with day-to-day responsibility for balancing supply and demand. We also operate, but do not own, the Scottish networks. Our networks comprise approximately 7,200 kilometres (4,474 miles) of overhead line, 1,500 kilometres (932 miles) of underground cable and 342 substations.
- We own and operate the gas National Transmission System in Great Britain, with day-to-day responsibility for balancing supply and demand. Our network comprises approximately 7,660 kilometres (4,760 miles) of high-pressure pipe and 618 above-ground installations.
- As Great Britain's System Operator (SO) we make sure gas and electricity is transported safely and efficiently from where it is produced to where it is consumed. From April 2019, Electricity System Operator (ESO) is a new standalone business within National Grid, legally separate from all other parts of the National Grid Group. This will provide the right environment to deliver a balanced and impartial ESO that can realise real benefits for consumers as we transition to a more decentralised, decarbonised electricity system.
- Other UK activities mainly relate to businesses operating in competitive markets outside of our core regulated businesses; including interconnectors, gas metering activities and a liquefied natural gas (LNG) importation terminal – all of which are now part of National Grid Ventures. National Grid Property is responsible for the management, clean-up and disposal of surplus sites in the UK. Most of these are former gas works.

Find out more about the energy challenge and how National Grid is helping find solutions to some of the challenges we face at <https://www.nationalgrid.com/group/news>

National Grid undertakes no obligation to update any of the information contained in this release, which speaks only as at the date of this release, unless required by law or regulation.

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