

North London Reinforcement Project

Requirement 14: Stage 4a

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1 THIS DOCUMENT

- 1.1.1 This document comprises a statement on archaeological requirements for Stage 4a of the authorised development as part of the North London Reinforcement Project ('the Project') as required by Schedule 2, Requirement 14 of The National Grid (North London Reinforcement) Development Consent Order 2014 ('the DCO').
- 1.1.2 Requirement 14 of the DCO is as follows:
- "(1) No stage of the authorised development shall commence until for that stage, a written scheme for the investigation of areas of archaeological interest (as identified in the environmental measures document) has, after consultation with the Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission for England, been approved by the relevant planning authority.*
- (2) Each scheme submitted under requirement 14 shall identify areas where one or more of—*
- (a) field work; and*
- (b) a watching brief are required, and the measures to be taken to protect, record or preserve any significant archaeological remains that may be found.*
- (3) Any archaeological works or watching brief carried out under the scheme submitted under requirement 14(1) must be by a suitably qualified person or body.*
- (4) Any archaeological works or watching brief must be carried out in general accordance with the scheme approved under requirement 14(1) unless otherwise agreed with the relevant planning authority."*

2 OVERVIEW OF THE PROJECT

- 2.1.1 The DCO was made by the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change for the Project on 16 April 2014, and came into force on 7 May 2014. The DCO provides powers to National Grid to carry out the Project, which comprises of the replacement of the existing 275kV overhead line (OHL) with a 400kV OHL from Waltham Cross substation in Epping Forest, through Enfield, and then to Tottenham substation in Haringey. The DCO also contains powers to carry out associated works to the substations at Waltham Cross, Brimsdown and Tottenham.
- 2.1.2 The Project falls within the administrative boundaries of, Epping Forest District Council, Enfield Council, the London Borough of Waltham Forest, and the London Borough of Haringey. The Project is also within the administrative boundaries of the Greater London Authority and Essex County Council, though these are not relevant planning authorities in relation to the Project.
- 2.1.3 The Project includes the following elements:
- Existing 275kV route uprating to 400kV for 14km from the Waltham Cross substation to Tottenham substation. This would comprise of:

- The existing 275kV conductor cables (wires) to be removed and replaced (i.e. reconducted) with 400kV wires. This would use the existing pylons.
- An extension to the Waltham Cross substation to provide a new 400kV Gas Insulated Switchgear (GIS) substation and associated OHL entry modifications.
- The replacement of two 275/132 kV Super Grid Transformers (SGTs) at Brimsdown with two new 400/132kV SGTs, located both inside and partially outside the existing Brimsdown substation boundary, with underground cable connections between these new SGTs and the existing substation.
- Works to bypass Tottenham substation, including the construction of a new pylon (VC1R) and cable sealing end (CSE) compound south of the Tottenham substation, and the removal of the existing VC1 pylon.
- Associated works, for example, temporary access roads, highway works temporary construction compounds, scaffolds, work sites and ancillary works.

3 STAGE 4A OVERVIEW

- 3.1.1 A written scheme of stages (required by schedule 2, Requirement 3 of the DCO) was submitted to the following authorities:
- Use of construction compound: to use existing construction compound at Tottenham Substation.
 - Access: establishment of a new access track off Watermead Way.
 - Vegetation clearance: removal of plants and vegetation in the vicinity of Tottenham Substation and relevant pylons to allow for the works within this stage.
- 3.1.2 Stage 4a will commence in Q3 2026 and be completed in Q4 2026.
- 3.1.3 The provision of the new access track off Watermead Way will comprise the extension of an existing dropped kerb on Watermead Way, with protection of existing pavement and creation of a new surfaced access track to the site of the new VC1R pylon.
- 3.1.4 The new access track will involve shallow excavation only, following by laying of compacted stone.

4 REQUIREMENT CONTEXT

4.1 References to this document within existing DCO documents

- 4.1.1 Environmental measures relevant to this Requirement which were proposed by National Grid during the Examination of the Project comprise:
- A written scheme of investigation will be prepared in consultation with the relevant planning authority and with Historic England.
 - Where ground disturbance within the Archaeological Priority Area is unavoidable, provision will be made for archaeological monitoring and the recording exposed features if necessary.
- 4.1.2 Where temporary access works are required, trackway panels will be used to protect the underlying ground. If not possible and excavation for the construction of a stone track is required, then archaeological monitoring will be undertaken during excavation within the Archaeological Priority Area.

5 CONSULTATION

- 5.1.1 Scheme-wide consultation was undertaken with the Greater London Archaeology Advisory Service (GLAAS), relating to archaeological implications of each stage of NLRP works. The archaeological brief produced by GLAAS (dated 24 January 2025) details archaeological measures for Stage 4 as a whole, prior to the approval of Version D of the Stage Plan (approved November 2025), which split Stage 4 into separate a/b/c sub-stages.
- 5.1.2 GLAAS archaeological assessments for Stage 4 primarily relates to what is now Stage 4b – as Stage 4a (access track off Watermead Way) will entail very little ground disturbance, we consider that a full WSI will not be required.
- 5.1.3 Historic England were consulted on 5 June 2026. They recommended that there is no Archaeological requirement as the proposal is unlikely to have a significant effect on heritage assets of archaeological interest.

6 HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT BASELINE SUMMARY

6.1 SITE LOCATION

- 6.1.1 The site is located at Tottenham Substation in the London Borough of Haringey, Greater London. The Pymme's Brook is located to the east, and the A1055 (Watermead Way) to the west.

6.2 TOPOGRAPHY

- 6.2.1 The site is located at approximately 11m OD and ground levels are likely to have been affected by previous development in the area and are not necessarily reflective of past topography.

6.3 GEOLOGY

- 6.3.1 British Geological Survey (BGS) digital data show the site to lie on London Clay bedrock overlaid by superficial deposits of alluvium (clay, silt, peat and sand). No geotechnical investigations were conducted as part of the proposed scheme, and

no historic BGS borehole records are located on the site. However, the Lea Valley Mapping Project (LVMP) provides a conceptual model for understanding the topography and landscapes of the past in the area (Corcoran et al 2011). Gravels beneath the alluvium belong to the lowest and youngest gravel aggradation of the River Lea, the Lea Valley Gravels. These gravels underlie the modern floodplain and were in part deposited in the Lateglacial (or late Devensian). The site therefore lies within a 'valley floor' landscape position, and slightly elevated on a 'low terrace' that runs along the western edge of the Lea. The low terrace would have formed dry land in the Early Holocene, attractive to Mesolithic people and sufficiently stable for soils to form.

- 6.3.2 The alluvium that masks the Lea Valley Gravels (and low terrace) was laid down throughout the Holocene (the last 10,000 years) by the Lea and its tributaries such as the Pymme's brook, which runs through the site parallel to the canalised channel of the Lee Navigation. Alluvium often comprises intercalated clay, silt, peat and sands that represent changes in the river environment. From the Iron Age onwards, over bank flooding and clay alluviation increased, with deposition and sediment reworking continuing into the post-medieval period. The upper horizons of the alluvial sequence therefore relate to later periods and are typically heavily reworked and weathered. They are therefore likely to be less archaeologically sensitive.
- 6.3.3 Exposures of Lea Valley Arctic Beds have also been recorded sandwiched within gravels at the interface of the floodplain gravels and higher terrace. The Arctic Beds are organic deposits containing eg mosses, dwarf birch and willow dating to just before the last glacial maximum (c 28 to 20 thousand years ago). Victorian exposures suggest that these cold climate organic deposits were eroded out as frozen blocks, transported and redeposited by the river within the gravel bed during Lateglacial downcutting (Corcoran et al 2011).

6.4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL POTENTIAL

- 6.4.1 The site is at the edge of the River Lea valley floor at the confluence with the Pymme's Brook. A low terrace, mapped in this landscape zone along the west of the valley would have been dry land in the Mesolithic.
- 6.4.2 Despite being located in an urban area formerly associated with heavy industry, the valley floor retains deep alluvial sequences that could preserve organic material, such as wooden structures, plant remains and other artefacts and ecofacts. Palaeolithic remains have been found in this landscape zone but comprise unstratified lithics and glacial faunal remains (i.e. ex situ). Palaeolithic potential for archaeology or Lea Valley Arctic Beds is considered low due to its scarcity. There is moderate to high potential for significant prehistoric archaeology, particularly Mesolithic activity (2.4), and Neolithic, Bronze Age and Iron Age evidence. Later Roman and early medieval activity is known locally on drier ground, with medieval settlement and a Roman villa recorded nearby (520m north and 720m southeast). In this valley floor landscape position, however, Roman finds are generally limited to randomly dispersed coin hoards and broaches (Corcoran et al, 2011).
- 6.4.3 Modern development on the west of the Pymme's brook will have truncated deposits and extensively removed archaeological remains and so archaeological survival will be limited within the site. As noted above (5.3.2), the upper horizons

of the alluvial sequence relate to later periods, are typically heavily reworked, weathered and are therefore less archaeologically sensitive. Shallow construction impact will therefore have a minimal effect on archaeologically significant deposits.

7 PROPOSED FURTHER ACTIONS

- 7.1.1 Based on the limited extent of ground disturbance and assessed low archaeological potential of shallow deposits, no further action is proposed with respect to archaeology for Stage 4a.

8 REFERENCES

Corcoran, J., Halsey, C., Spurr, G., Burton, E. and Jamieson, D 2011, *Mapping past landscapes in the lower Lea valley: a geoarchaeological study of the Quaternary sequence*, MOLA Monograph Series 55.