

Frequently asked questions

Richborough Connection Project

Our Work

Q What does National Grid do?

A It is National Grid's job to connect people to the energy they use. We own and manage the grids to which many different energy sources are connected. In Britain we run the systems that deliver gas and electricity across the entire country. We hold a vital position at the centre of the energy system, joining everything up.

It is National Grid's job to make sure there is enough energy available when people need it through our system of overhead lines, underground cables and substations that transport electricity across the country.

Q What is the Richborough Connection?

A The Richborough Connection is a project to join the Nemo Link[®] (an electricity link between Belgium and the UK) to our existing electricity network. A new electricity connection between Richborough and Canterbury is required to do this.

Q Why does National Grid need to build a new connection?

A There is no National Grid high-voltage transmission network in the Richborough area, so we will need to build a new connection to join Nemo Link to the national grid high-voltage transmission network. Our Need Case document explains this in more detail.

Q Why does the connection have to go from Richborough to Canterbury?

A We looked at a several ways to connect Nemo Link to our electricity network. In our Strategic Options Report we considered six options:

- Richborough to Canterbury North substation (onshore option)
- Richborough to Cleve Hill (onshore option)
- Richborough to Kemsley (onshore option)
- Richborough to Cleve Hill (using a subsea cable)
- Richborough to Sellindge (using a subsea cable)
- Richborough to Kemsley (using a subsea cable)

The onshore options considered the use of overhead line and underground cable technology. We examined the technical, environmental and socio-economic issues associated with each option, as well as the build and lifetime costs. The subsea options would incur substantially greater costs than the onshore options and would also have the potential to affect international wildlife sites. The onshore options to Cleve Hill and Kemsley involve longer connection routes and have potential to cause a greater impact on the environment.

Q What route will the connection take?

A The best way to see our proposed route is to look at the maps that we have recently published. These can be found in the Maps section of our website, or in our newsletter or Overview Report.



Q Will this be the final route or will there be changes?

A We have taken on board your feedback and the findings from our environmental and technical studies and, taking this into account, we believe the route strikes the right balance between the sensitivities of a new overhead line in the area and the cost on everyone's bills.

However, our proposals can still change so we would like to know what people think and whether they can be improved. Your feedback plays an important role in influencing our work, and we'll be looking at it carefully before we submit our application.

Making the connection

Q Will you be using pylons to create this connection, and if so what kind?

A Yes. We have looked at both the lattice pylon and the new T-pylon, which we've been developing recently. To date, we've undertaken a number of studies and surveys and in May 2014 we asked for the views of a range of different stakeholders, including landowners, tenants and the general public.

The feedback we received doesn't show a strong preference for a particular type of pylon. Our studies have shown that on balance lattice pylons would have less of a visual and environmental impact on the local area.

We therefore propose standard lattice pylons for the majority of the route with the exception of the Ash Levels where we are proposing to use a lower height lattice pylon. In this section, using a lower height pylon will allow us to reduce impacts on the local area and wildlife.

In total, the new connection will be using approximately 25% fewer pylons than UK Power Networks' existing line (which we propose to take down).

Q Will you be putting any part of the connection underground?

A We carefully considered whether there were any particularly sensitive locations where it was appropriate to use more expensive underground cables, but we feel that a carefully designed and routed overhead line using natural screening such as trees and other existing landscape features, would achieve the best balance. This is important because the costs of our connections end up on everyone's bills.

Consultation

Q What is the statutory pre-application consultation and how does this differ from your previous stages of consultation?

A The Planning Act 2008 (the Act) requires that certain formal activities are undertaken and sets out who must be consulted, such as local communities, people who own or hold an interest in land and certain prescribed consultees (e.g. Natural England). Our proposals have now reached a stage where we are ready to undertake our formal (known as statutory) pre-application consultation. This is likely to be our last consultation on the Richborough Connection project before we apply for consent so it's important to let us have your comments if there are things you want us to consider.

Q What influence does our feedback really have?

A Your feedback is really important to us and will help us to shape our thinking before we submit our plans in the autumn.

Your feedback, the themes and issues raised and our responses to them will be summarised in a Consultation Report which will be produced and submitted as part of the application to PINS.

Your feedback continues to be important. If there are changes you think we should make let us know and, importantly, let us know why.

All comments will be carefully considered and our proposals will be reviewed before we apply for consent for the connection.

Q Will further consultation take place?

A This is likely to be our last consultation on the Richborough Connection project before we apply for consent, so it's important to let us have your comments if there are things you want us to consider.

Upon acceptance of our application by the Planning Inspectorate, you will have the chance to provide your views during the examination process.

Q How can I submit my feedback?

A Complete a feedback form. Forms have been sent to all addresses within our consultation zone. They can also be downloaded from our website or picked up from one of our information points.

Visit one of our consultation events and complete a feedback form.

You can also write to us at our freepost address: FREEPOST RICHBCONNECTION, email us at: richboroughconnection@communitycomms.co.uk or give us your comments online on our website www.richboroughconnection.co.uk.

Our community relations team are also available via Freephone to help answer any queries on 0800 157 7878.

Next Steps

Q What happens after National Grid submits its application to the Planning Inspectorate?

A After we have submitted our application, the Planning Inspectorate will have 28 days to accept the application and decide if it can proceed to the examination stage.

If the application is accepted, those wishing to be involved in the examination process must register their interest to the Planning Inspectorate. Those who have registered are invited to provide more detail of their views in writing and may be invited to speak at public hearings.

After the examination has ended, the Planning Inspectorate has three months to recommend to the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change whether or not the application should be approved. The Secretary of State then has a further three months to make the final decision.

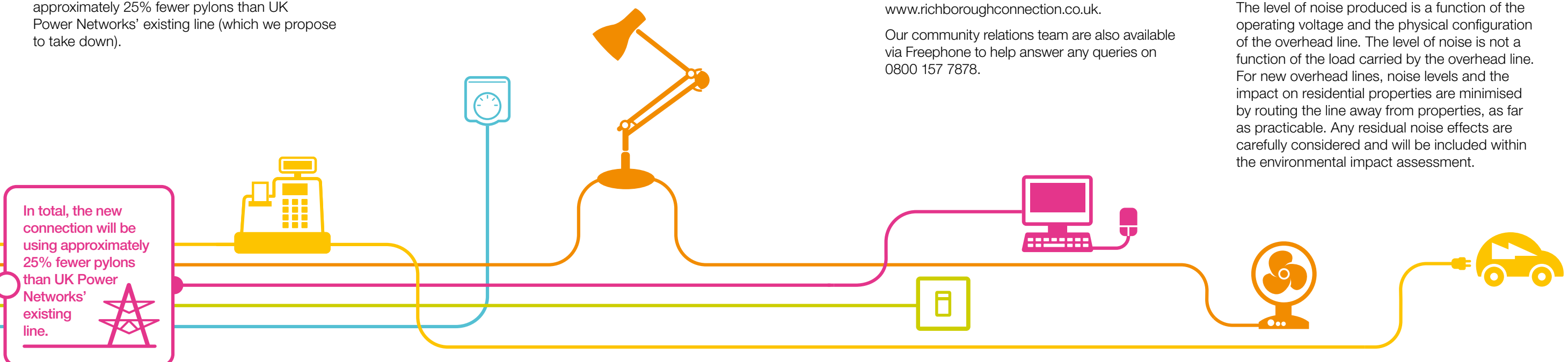
Q By when does National Grid need to build this new line?

A We plan to build the line in 2017 and 2018 subject to planning permission. Once our line is up and running we will then remove the UK Power Networks line. We expect to complete this work in 2020.

Noise and Electric and Magnetic Fields

Q Will the connection emit any noise?

A Overhead lines can produce more noise in damp or wet weather, or after long dry spells of weather when airborne debris can stick to the line – until it is washed away by rain. The level of noise produced is a function of the operating voltage and the physical configuration of the overhead line. The level of noise is not a function of the load carried by the overhead line. For new overhead lines, noise levels and the impact on residential properties are minimised by routing the line away from properties, as far as practicable. Any residual noise effects are carefully considered and will be included within the environmental impact assessment.



Q What are electric and magnetic fields (EMFs)?

A Electric and magnetic fields (EMFs) are produced from all electrical equipment, including overhead lines, cables and domestic electrical appliances. They are around us, in our homes, places of work and wherever else electricity is used. Electric fields are proportional to the voltage used in the equipment and magnetic fields are proportional to the electrical current flowing through the equipment.

Q Can EMFs have an impact on my health?

A No negative health effects relating to exposure to EMFs have been established. However, despite 30 years of research there is still some uncertainty in the science surrounding this subject. National Grid fully recognises people's concerns and takes this issue very seriously. The safety of the public, local communities and our employees is central to everything National Grid does. In the case of EMFs, we commit to following the guidance on safe levels of exposure given by the Government and authoritative independent scientific organisations, such as the World Health Organisation (WHO) and Public Health England (and its successor bodies). For further information on EMFs please visit the website www.emfs.info

Getting in touch

Q How can I get in touch with the Richborough Connection project?

A Please find all our contact details below.

Q How can I contact the Nemo Link project?

A If you have any questions about the Nemo Link interconnector, please contact the community relations team in one of the following ways:

Call on **Freephone 0800 083 3149** between 9am – 5pm, Monday to Friday (an answerphone service is available outside these core hours)

Email:

nemointerconnector@communitycomms.co.uk

Write to:

Freepost RSLG-YXEU-BJUC,
Nemo Link, PO BOX 68215,
London, SW1P 9UJ

Contact us:



Leave a comment on the website, via the Have your say page: www.richboroughconnection.co.uk



Call our Freephone helpline number: **0800 157 7878** (lines open 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday)



E-mail: richboroughconnection@communitycomms.co.uk



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Nemo Link:



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