

By email

Dear Anna

Please find below my response on behalf of Snowdonia National Park Authority with regard to the above consultation. I have followed the 5 consultation questions set I would be very happy to answer any further queries in more detail – and my details are at the foot of this email.

Consultation Question 1: Do you agree with our view that NGET has fulfilled its VIP policy commitments?

Yes I do. The NGET VIP Policy has ultimately led to the careful selection of sites that yield the greatest landscape benefit, as well as contributing to preserving and enhancing wildlife and cultural heritage within designated landscapes in England and Wales. This has been achieved through close and regular engagement with key stakeholders (and local communities). The Stakeholder Advisory Group (which includes a range of interested stakeholders) have been very closely involved in all decision making. Having sat on the VIP SAG I can vouch for the fact that it's a very informative and inclusive group and everyone on it appear to be valued for their experience and expertise (no easy task given the scale of the task). Consultation at local level has also been excellent with local communities being given full and early access to the project and options, including making good use of local stakeholders through the Stakeholder reference Group (SRG). The fact that there is so much local support for the project and that the planning application was granted unanimously by the Planning Committee is in part linked to the fulfilment of these VIP Policy commitments.

Consultation Question 2: Do you agree with our view that the Snowdonia EPI project is the valid outcome of NGET working with stakeholders on the selection of EPI projects?

As alluded to above, I would strongly agree with this. Arriving at a 3.5km stretch of pylons in Snowdonia having assessed all transmission lines in all designated landscapes in Wales and England has required an effective and strategic process closely overseeing by key stakeholders. This has been delivered skilfully and very effectively by NGET – who have ensure that stakeholder involvement has been genuine – and the input of all stakeholders will have had an impact on the final outcomes.

Consultation Question 3: Do you agree with our views on option appraisal carried out by NGET?

100% yes. The SAG fully assessed the options presented by NGET, and like yourselves we consider the favoured option will remove the maximum number of pylons, and at the same time avoid sections of direct burial that would likely cause some disruption to local communities and disturb the special area of conservation alongside the estuary, which is protected under the Habitats Regulations. This will therefore contribute the most towards the VIP Policy as well as the National Park Authority's statutory purposes of protecting and enhancing landscape, wildlife and cultural heritage (whilst also fulfilling our Duty to ensure the needs of local communities are also met).

Consultation Question 4: Do you agree with our view on the technical scope of the Snowdonia EPI project proposed by NGET?

Yes I do. As Director of Planning & Land Management at the National Park Authority I have carefully assessed the technical, environmental, social and economic impacts of the proposal. Our conclusion was to recommend approval, which was unanimously supported by the Planning Committee. Therefore, overall we agree with your consideration of the scope of NGET's proposed.

Consultation Question 5: Do you agree with our cost assessment of NGET's proposed Snowdonia EPI project?

Yes – having assessed this your assessment would appear to be reasonable and robust.

Kind Regards,

Jonathan

Jonathan Cawley, MTP, MRTPI

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