



Dedham Vale AONB and Stour Valley Project
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DPCR5 Response
Electricity Distribution
Office of Gas and Electricity Markets
9 Millbank
LONDON
SW1P 3GE

10th September 2009

Dear Sir/Madam

OFGEM DPCR5 Consultation 2009
Document Ref: 93/09 - Undergrounding in Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) and National Parks

Retention of allowance

We would firstly like to extend our support for the continuation of the allowance to carry out network undergrounding works in Areas Outstanding Natural Beauty and National Parks. To date, DPCR4 has facilitated several successful schemes in the Dedham Vale, all bringing significant landscape improvement.

Voltage caps

We welcome the proposal to remove voltage caps.

Voluntary Nature of Scheme

We have had a very positive experience of working with EDF Energy Networks in the eastern region, however, we are very aware that the voluntary nature of the scheme has been a weakness in other parts of the country. As such, anything OFGEM can do to encourage all DNOs to engage with the scheme in the same way as EDF Energy Networks have in the east and south eastern regions would be welcomed.

Project Officer

We consider a dedicated Project Officer to be an essential element of the successful delivery of schemes in protected landscapes. We have benefited from having a Project Officer in the East and South East regions and this has undoubtedly been a primary factor in the successful delivery of schemes in these areas.

New infrastructure and boundary issues

We consider that any new network infrastructure in National Parks and AONBs should be undergrounded.

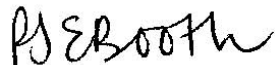
The setting of AONBs and National Parks is important to protect. As such, we consider that there may be circumstances where it would be appropriate to extend the scheme beyond the 'boundary' in order to provide an improved landscape within the protected landscape itself. Some flexibility on the funding of schemes within the setting of protected landscapes would be welcomed.

Interaction with DCPR4

We welcome the change of definition of the completion point of an undergrounding scheme, and particularly the allowance of 1 year beyond 1st April 2010 for the dismantlement of existing overhead assets.

I hope that these comments are of assistance.

Yours sincerely



Paula Booth
Operations Manager
Dedham Vale AONB and Stour Valley Project