

Anna Kulhavy
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Dear Anna

**Consultation on Ofgem's assessment of National Grid Electricity Transmission's proposed
Visual Impact Provision policy**

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on National Grid Electricity Transmission's (National Grid) proposed Visual Impact Provision (VIP) policy.

The Campaign for National Parks is the independent national voice for the 13 National Parks in England and Wales. Our mission is to inspire everyone to enjoy and look after National Parks – the nation's green treasures.

National Parks are our finest landscapes with the highest level of protection and as champions of the National Parks we are keen to see that every opportunity is taken to conserve and enhance their wildlife, cultural heritage and natural beauty for future generations to enjoy. Over the last few years, we have lobbied hard for National Grid to be able to reduce the visual impact of their existing overhead infrastructure in protected landscapes in the same way that the Distribution Network Operators (DNOs) have been doing successfully for a number of years. We, therefore, welcomed Ofgem's proposal in 2012 to allow this to happen and we are pleased that Ofgem supports the proposed VIP policy that National Grid has now submitted.

We particularly welcome National Grid's collaborative approach to stakeholder engagement and the development of a clear set of guiding principles as we believe this is the fairest way of prioritising the schemes to benefit from this allowance. In addition, the appointment of a qualified landscape architect to compare and evaluate the relative impacts of different lines with regard to landscape character and visual amenity will provide an objective assessment of the landscape enhancement benefits to be gained from different schemes. We also welcome National Grid's commitment to working collaboratively with the DNOs as this will maximise the impact that can be delivered from both allowances. Finally we are pleased that National Grid has taken on board suggestions we made during the consultation with stakeholders last autumn, including extending the policy to apply to lines adjacent to protected landscapes that still affect that landscape. The DNOs are already able to use a similar flexibility with positive results.

In conclusion, we firmly support the implementation of the proposed VIP policy and are looking forward to working with National Grid as part of the Stakeholder Advisory Group to help prioritise the most important projects for mitigation.

Yours sincerely



Ruth Bradshaw
Policy and Research Manager