

Cumbria County Council

Resources and Transformation • Information Governance Team • Lonsdale Building • The Courts • Carlisle • CA3 8NA
T: 01228 221234 • E: information.governance@cumbria.gov.uk

E-mail:

27 July 2016
Your reference:
Our reference: FOI 2016-0773

Dear

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000 - DISCLOSURE

The council has completed its search relating to your request for information a letter sent to the National Grid, which we received on 22 July 2016.

The council does hold information within the definition of your request.

Request

I understand that Cumbria County Council has written a letter to National Grid co-signed with other local authorities including Copeland; are you in a position to be able to share this letter please?

Response

Please see attached

Most of the information that we provide in response to requests submitted under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and Environmental Information Regulations 2004 will be subject to copyright protection. In most cases the copyright will be owned by Cumbria County Council. However the copyright in other information may be owned by another person or organisation, as indicated on the information itself.

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For information where the copyright is owned by another person or organisation you must apply to the owner to obtain their permission.

If you are dissatisfied with the way the council has responded to your request you can request an Internal Review. If you would like to request a Review please contact the Information Governance Team using the details at the top of this letter.

Further information can be found on the council's website: <http://www.cumbria.gov.uk/council-democracy/accesstoinformation/internalreviewscomplaints.asp>

Yours sincerely,

Duncan W. Queen

Senior Manager – Performance and Risk

Cumbria County Council

Chief Executive's Office • The Courts • English Street
Carlisle • Cumbria • CA3 8NA
T: 01228 226301 • E: diane.wood@cumbria.gov.uk

Our Ref: WYG/A072895/NWCC/Mitigation Response

30 June 2016

Neil Lyons
National Grid
National Grid House
Warwick Technology Park
Gallows Hill
Warwick, CV34 6DA

Dear Mr Lyons

North West Coast Connections – Duddon Estuary

The delay to your consultation on the preferred route option for the North West Coast Connections project has created the opportunity for improved collaborative working between National Grid and the affected authorities. As you know, the County Council is leading the PPA Group that is comprised of all the affected local authorities and this letter is written on behalf of the PPA group. Your project, whilst delivering substantial investment into the UK, will have significant impact on the coast of Cumbria, passing through areas that are cherished by our communities and areas of national, and international, landscape significance. We therefore welcome the opportunity for additional engagement and hope that this will result in your preferred route option being more acceptable to our communities.

The PPA Group was pleased to have had a more open discussion on mitigation options for the Duddon Estuary in the workshop held on 10th June. There is a complex set of environmental issues in this area that requires careful consideration by National Grid. After consideration of the Duddon Estuary options presented by National Grid, the PPA Group strongly recommends that a tunnel is the only acceptable route option across the Duddon Estuary. This option would avoid the considerable problems raised by the proposed route across Foxfield Ridge and the Duddon Mosses SAC, as well as in the setting of the Lake District National Park that have been identified in the Duddon Estuary. Whilst we acknowledge that designing a route crossing the Duddon Estuary is challenging and costly, it is vital that the appropriate design and mitigation is provided.

Cumbria County Council

The preference is for a tunnel head east of Millom in an existing industrial area, and a tunnel head to the north of Askam-in-Furness. Furthermore, it must be recognised that taking forward a tunnel across the Duddon route will lead to significant impacts in themselves that must be satisfactorily addressed. Additionally, this option has not previously been subject to consultation with the local residents of Haverigg and Millom, and this must be a priority. It is recommended that the route is undergrounded to the tunnel head to minimise impacts to the landscape and to local communities. We will continue to seek reassurance that the resilience of electricity provision and future ability to connect to the distribution system in this area will be addressed as part of a holistic plan for the area.

The PPA Group welcomes continued engagement by National Grid and the opportunity for collaboration. This will help to ensure that the significant impacts of the proposed NWCC project are properly addressed, thereby helping to de-risk the project through the DCO process and increase delivery certainty. The PPA Group expect that the views expressed in this letter will be fully considered in project design finalisation (in terms of the s42 consultation) and in developing an appropriate mitigation strategy for this part of the route.

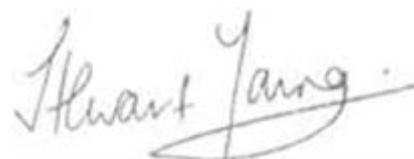
We would welcome the opportunity to meet with you to discuss the Duddon Estuary and other parts of the route and would be willing to participate in any discussions with OfGem to inform the decision that will be made on your preferred route for consultation.

With regards to ensuring satisfactory mitigation of the NWCC project as a whole, the PPA Group are considering the measures that will be required to address other impacts relating in particular to landscape mitigation, transport, skills and supply chain, tourism and tunnel construction. We will be sharing our views on those issues separately and would also wish to include these topics in future discussions with you.

Yours sincerely



Diane Wood
Chief Executive



Stewart Young
Leader of the Council