



Historic England

By e-mail to: cbnetworks@beis.gov.uk

Our ref: Consultation
response

Date: 14/6/2023

Direct Dial: 01223 582710

Ref: Community Benefits for Electricity Transmission Network Infrastructure

Historic England is the Government's statutory adviser on all matters relating to the historic environment in England. We are a non-departmental public body established under the National Heritage Act 1983 and sponsored by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS). We champion and protect England's historic places, providing expert advice to local planning authorities, developers, owners and communities to help ensure our historic environment is properly understood, enjoyed and cared for.

We welcome the opportunity to submit a response to the Community Benefits for Electricity Transmission Network Infrastructure consultation. Please find comments below

Historic England's Response

We broadly welcome the overall approach set out in the document to deliver community benefits at a local level with a focus on people and affected communities.

For the purposes of community benefits for network infrastructure, Historic England understands the community benefit is an additional tool, separate from the planning process, to ensure that where infrastructure is necessary, communities can directly benefit from hosting this infrastructure. As contributions can also be secured through the planning process, there is a risk expectation regarding applicability of the community benefits tool may be mis-understood by communities.

As the Government's adviser on the historic environment Historic England is keen to ensure that protection and enhancement of the historic environment is fully taken into account at all stages of any community project.



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There are a wide variety of community benefits that can be delivered which, if undertaken in partnership with the local people, can enhance the economy, society and the environment in a local area. Due to the potential harm caused by such infrastructure projects on the historic environment, we would ask that any community benefits have a focus around local heritage and the historic environment. This could include repairs and maintains of historic structures, projects around historic landscapes and could support local aspirations around greater access to heritage.

In addition, Community Benefits for Electricity Transmission Network Infrastructure benefits can also be used to deliver investment and growth in the local area, especially when used to invest in local infrastructure, supply chains and skills.

It must be noted, that alongside this review, the government is also developing onshore wind partnerships in England that will enable supportive communities hosting new onshore wind infrastructure to enjoy the benefits of doing so, through developers supporting local energy discounts, new community infrastructure projects and the like, and will consult in due course. Historic England would like to ask that both exercises are combined to ensure alignment of outputs.

We likewise welcome the approach to creating voluntary guidance and tailoring approaches to local need. We consider that it would however be useful to establish a set of overarching guidance or principles for these voluntary schemes because of a need to ensure consistency of approach and delivery. We would like to see this include a focus on the local historic environment.

In terms of funding or delivery mechanisms we would welcome any further discussion as to how the historic environment could be incorporated. We can provide information about community heritage projects and examples of other successful and locally delivered heritage focused projects.

Each community benefit conduit, whether it's a small grants pot or direct awards for outreach projects, must be considered on a localised level and not generalised across a region especially as each place has its own needs. Consideration should also be made to support projects which link in with the wider strategic agenda and which unlock further funding for larger community benefits.

Our response is based on the information provided by in your consultation. Please do contact me, either via email or the number below, if you have any queries.

Yours sincerely,

Will Fletcher

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