

12TH DECEMBER, 2016

Blawith and Subberthwaite Parish Council Response to NWCC Section 42 Procedure.

1) The Parish Council believes that the social, economic and environmental impact of industrialisation of our fine landscape is a defining issue for all the communities along and adjacent to the routes now proposed for the new massive, intrusive pylons and associated sub-stations for the North West Coast Connections.

2) The proposals to construct 50 metre pylons, 37 metre pylons and 13 metre wooden pylons through many of the areas bordering the Lake District i.e. its setting is nothing short of industrial vandalism. Along with the construction of many CSECs and CSEP platforms ugly, offensive panoramas will be created.

Silecroft through to Barrow in Furness, including the Whicham Valley, the Duddon Valley and estuary, Kirby in Furness and the Furness peninsula are an integral part of the entire unique west coast area.

The impact these pylons would have on the Lake District National Park appears to have been totally ignored by National Grid. This is not to minimise the catastrophic effects they will have on the areas they actually blight.

The "buffer zone" of the Lake District is a continuation of the irreplaceable fauna and flora, history and physical characteristics of the lakes themselves. Indeed in most instances these buffer zones enhance the lakes by their own unique habitats and settings.

There is no obvious border, local planning authorities recognise this and seek to protect, conserve and enhance landscape character and features, this means that planning applications outside the national park can be refused because of the impact they could have upon areas within the National Park. This refers directly to pylons that may have a zone of visual influence many kilometres beyond the location of the development itself.

3) In outstanding scenic areas such as National Parks and their surrounding rural areas, some 60 – 70 percent of visitors, and the employment and other economic benefits that are associated with them, are motivated by the drawing power and experience of a high quality environment. Expenditure by visitors to Cumbria has created what is now the largest and fastest growing sector of the Cumbrian economy. That growth, which is extending out across Cumbria in scenically attractive areas adjacent to the National Park, will be damaged by current National Grid proposals which are clearly against the policy objectives for heritage environments set out in Government strategies.

4) For the Lake District National Park, a bid for Inscription as a World Heritage Site has been in progress since 2014 endorsed by 25 of the leading organizations in Cumbria (mostly part of or supported by Government and the public sector). That bid is due to be resolved in 2017. Its focus is on the Cultural Landscape that reflects the inspirational quality of a landscape that has been moulded and developed to its present standing over many centuries by the interaction between man and the environment.

5) The quality of the cultural landscape has inspired generations of painters, poets and writers. Through thinkers such as Ruskin in the 19th century, appreciation of the local landscape led directly

to environmental awareness and understanding that initially created the National Trust and the later National Parks. It continues to underpin current understanding of environmental and heritage landscape values nationally. There can be no justification to jeopardise such hard-won long-term benefits for short-term cost gains.

6) The cultural landscape that developed over centuries is precious, fragile and once destroyed by heedless short-term industrialisation cannot be recreated. It offers respite, relief and recreation to millions from the physical, mental and spiritual stresses of 21st century urban living, which is likely to be even more valuable in the future than it is already today.

7) We believe the negative impacts caused to transport and connectivity problems inflicted on the social and economic life of all the areas is incalculable. Further we believe this has not been fully addressed or understood by National Grid.

Local people (and in this we include farmers and all businesses) have to move in and out of the Lake District every day, sometimes many times a day. A single set of traffic lights causes severe chaos and tail backs often of many miles, the obvious inconvenience to trade and the local economy cannot be over stated. National grid would cause continuous disruption for years as the roads and bridges, which are an integral part of the character of the whole area, and often objects of antiquity in themselves were not constructed to ever allow the movement of heavy and large construction traffic. The Duddon bridge for example is single traffic and very narrow.

The country lanes are inadequate in width and alignment to accommodate the size and number of vehicles that will need to use them. These local lanes are also places of rare beauty and fauna and flora habitats. The walled roads and lanes, so vital to the cultural heritage of the areas will not allow for the movement of large vehicles.

The dust and air quality will become a serious issue, as the construction teams will be working seven days a week there will be a constant build up and people with breathing problems will be put at risk. In lower lying lanes and areas this pollution will accumulate.

We have had some serious flooding problems recently in Cumbria. The water table could be affected by all these intrusive workings, leading to stream and river flow diversions and alterations to flood planes and catchment areas. Possible consequences of these actions could be loss of even more farmland as it floods and cannot drain away, flooded roads, affecting the connectivity further, people's houses affected and possessions destroyed and lives made a misery.

The impact on visitors will be serious as people so not wish to stand in long lines of waiting traffic in order to reach the Lake District. This visitor numbers will drop, affecting the economy as a whole. People do have choices as to where they spend their free time.

The health of local people could be put at risk, in outlying areas people are forced to use cars and social isolation is very much recognised as a serious modern mental health issue that is already neglected by the government. National Grids proposal seeks to add significantly towards further health problems in this vital area. Carers and daily district nurses will find their timetables totally unworkable. Ambulances and emergency vehicles will also be hindered in movement and be required to take significant diversions to access daily services eg taking people to chemotherapy treatments.

Whilst the electric and magnetic effects on health remain unproven, they are (as stated by the WHO) possibly carcinogenic to young children in particular. National Grid whilst recognising these statements does in no way allow for local feelings in its determination to put pylons near homes and schools. Kirkby - In -Furness school, where some of our local children attend, will have pylons very nearby. A totally unacceptable situation.

8) National Grid does not appreciate the wider implications of its actions, it has confined itself to the narrow and self serving view of its share holders in placing these pylons above ground.

The National Lottery Heritage Funding organisation has given many millions of pounds to fund local people to be trained in improving, restoring and maintaining their own environments. For example learning ancient skills, such as hedging, dry stone walling, checking the health of rivers and lakes, replanting woodland areas, planting flowers, using local archives to assist in visitor guided walks, lead by local people. All of this is to help and maintain our visitor economy, which will be severely affected by the installation of the pylons.

9) The failure of National Grid to evaluate and understand the significant effects on key habitats and protected species is evident. The erection of the pylons and the access roads alone will destroy and disturb fauna and flora that cannot be restored. It is not possible to mitigate against these rare environments as they are just that -- rare and frequently the only examples of such animals and plants. The Duddon Estuary is SSSI, a Special Protected Area (SPA) and part of the Morecambe Bay Special Area of Conservation and these protections are to be ignored. This thinking is inexplicable.

We believe, therefore , that actions to reduce the highly intrusive visual, social and economic impacts of the cable routing now proposed in South West Cumbria should be treated as integral and not additional to the inevitable costs of securing long-term energy supplies nationally.

We believe the only way forward to ensure the future of south Cumbria and to leave an unscathed environment, a unique inheritance for all the people of the UK to enjoy, for ever, is to take the cables out to sea at SILECROFT and bring them into land in Lancashire