# EIA Quality Mark Case Study

## A Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) – The North London Reinforcement Project

![Image of a landscape with pylons and transmission lines.](image)

## Key Issues – Minimising the effects of the Project on the Lee Valley Park

The ZBC overhead line (comprising pylons numbered ZBC 1 to ZBC 43) extends from Waltham Cross substation in the district of Epping Forest to Tottenham substation in the London Borough of Haringey. Its route follows the Lee Valley across lakes and through marshes, along the sides of reservoirs and through recreational open space in urban fringe locations. The landscape along much of the route is influenced by neighbouring industrial and residential land uses.

As this is a NSIP, considerable pre-application consultation was required. This covered the reasons why the Project was needed, the initial options that were available and changes that were proposed as a result of feedback from interested parties. The Project design also needed to factor in other constraints such as programming of the works to avoid effects on designated nature conservation sites (Lee Valley Special Protection Area [SPA]/Ramsar site and its constituent SSSIs).

## Purpose of the project

Under the Electricity Act, National Grid has a statutory duty to develop and maintain an efficient, coordinated and economical system of electricity transmission. Electricity demand in Greater London (in 2015/16) represents approximately 17% of the predicted demand in England and Wales. There is little power generation in the region, so demand is satisfied by power imported from neighbouring regions on existing heavily utilised transmission routes. To meet this need the transmission system in North London requires reinforcement by 2016.

## Description of the project

It is necessary to uprate the existing ZBC overhead line (which runs from near Waltham Abbey, Essex, through North London to Tottenham substation) to carry an increased voltage (from 275,000 volts [275kV] to 400,000 volts [400kV]) and to upgrade the existing substations along the overhead lines at Waltham Cross, Brimsdown and Hackney. The construction works involve replacing the wires on the existing pylons with ones of greater capacity. This is a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project under the Planning Act 2008.
Lessons learnt

Consultation – early consultation with key stakeholders regarding the fundamental principles of the project including strategic options that were considered and why the uprating was the preferred option. Listening to feedback on design issues and changing the proposals where appropriate to address concerns. Consultation continued throughout the preparation of the Environmental Statement.

Working as a team
National Grid recognised the benefits of having a multi-disciplinary project team. This meant the EIA Project manager had ready access to the design engineers, land agents, legal team, communications team etc throughout the project. Issues and solutions could then be discussed and agreed with overall positive outcomes for the Project.

Lessons learnt cont.

Positive effects – the consultation enabled design solutions to be identified early on in the EIA process, which reduced the overall effects of the Project, e.g. a smaller substation extension at Waltham Cross and a section of underground cable in Tottenham Marshes instead of an above ground design. Further changes were made post-submission to address consultee comments.

Reducing issues during the Examination Stage – consultation throughout the Project to agree issues such as ecological enhancement measures and the overall design has meant limited environmental issues have remained and as a result there were no EIA specific Hearings.

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