

Tendring District Council closing comments - Tendring District Council (TDC) remains committed to supporting the Government's target of achieving net zero by 2050, including the expansion of renewable energy through offshore wind generation. However, nearly ten months after our initial comments on this Development Consent Order (DCO) application, the proposal continues to assume an underground connection into the proposed East Anglian Connection Node (EACN) substation, east of Ardeigh. This substation is part of the National Grid's Norwich to Tilbury (N2T) upgrade but remains unconsented and is still in the Statutory Consultation Stage. Given that the EACN is already experiencing delays at this early stage, we believe this application is wholly premature.

TDC remains deeply concerned that the cumulative impacts of this and three other associated infrastructure projects—North Falls Offshore Wind Farm, Tarchon Interconnector, and the EACN—have not been fully considered. Greater integration across these projects, including full consideration of the Offshore Coordination Support Scheme (OCSS) outcomes, is now even more critical, but we remain unconvinced that this is happening for reasons previously set out. The lack of coordination and clarity around the end result has caused entire communities to feel that they are under siege, this has caused significant confusion and distress among local residents, particularly those in Ardeigh, Little Bromley, and the surrounding countryside. We maintain that the integration between these projects is wholly inadequate and must be significantly improved.

The location of the connection point for this project continues to be dictated by the N2T upgrade. While we acknowledge that significant progress has been made regarding landscape mitigation for the proposed substation, considerable areas remain unaddressed as previously set out, the surrounding area is in active agricultural use, its predominantly arable, flat, open, and rural. It is undeniable that this proposal, alongside other planned projects, will introduce an intrusive industrial presence that will permanently alter the landscape and impose considerable constraints on local farmers making an already challenging situation even more challenging. The visual impact and impact for farmers will be further exacerbated when all associated infrastructure developments are considered together.

As a host authority, Tendring District, especially the area between Ardeigh and Little Bromley, will bear a disproportionate share of the negative impacts resulting from the construction and operation of onshore transmission networks, even with mitigation efforts. A key concern remains the absence of any provision for Community Benefit contributions. TDC stands ready to engage with the developer to discuss potential projects that could help alleviate the burden on affected residents. We formally invite discussions on a voluntary Community Benefit Contribution package for the lifetime of the project, as measures that address social value are of great importance to TDC.

While we acknowledge ongoing engagement with the applicant, we strongly urge definitive commitments to education, training, and employment opportunities within the District in the final DCO. Any project of this scale that fails to address economic disparities and ensure job accessibility in the transition to net zero would be unacceptable.

Furthermore, we remain highly concerned about the impact on tourism in the District, particularly in terms of highway disruptions and visual intrusions along the coast during the construction phase. Tourism is a vital pillar of the Tendring economy, supporting hotels, caravan parks, tourist attractions, and local businesses such as shops and cafés. Disruptions from the project are likely to have a significant adverse effect on this sector.

TDC urges all stakeholders to prioritize a more integrated and community-conscious approach to this project to minimize its long-term negative effects on both the environment and the local population.

Kind Regards,

Jacob Jaarsma

Planning Policy Officer

Tel: [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]@tendringdc.gov.uk

Normally based at Town Hall, Station Road, Clacton-on-Sea, Essex, CO15 1SE