

The Great Grid Upgrade

BT-NG-020621-545-0269

Bramford to Twinstead Reinforcement

Volume 8: Examination Submissions

Document 8.7.7: Technical Note on Cultural Associations

**Final Issue A
December 2023**

Planning Inspectorate Reference: EN020002

**The Infrastructure Planning (Examination Procedure) Rules 2010
Regulation 8(1)(k)**

nationalgrid

Page intentionally blank

Contents

Executive Summary	ii
1. Introduction	1
1.1 Purpose of the Technical Note	1
1.2 Relevant Policy	1
1.3 Cultural Associations and Setting	2
2. Assessment of Cultural Associations	3
2.1 References in the Environmental Statement	3
2.2 Benton End House	4
2.3 Overbury Hall	6
2.4 Historic Landscape Characterisation	7
3. Conclusion	10

Executive Summary

Need for the Technical Note

This Technical Note provides a summary on how cultural associations have been considered as part of the application for development consent on the Bramford to Twinstead Reinforcement (the project). It provides further details in relation to the implicit historic associations of the heritage assets around the Brett Valley with artists and artistic works, with specific reference to Benton End House and Overbury Hall. This matter was raised in the Suffolk Councils' LIR [REP1-045] (paragraphs 6.136 to 6.138) and by the Examining Authority in Action Point 6 in Issue Specific Hearing 4 [EV-045].

Assessment on Cultural Associations

The assessment presented in the Technical Note demonstrates how cultural associations were considered within the Environmental Statement (ES) supporting the application for development consent. The Technical Note then provides further details around the assessment of cultural associations, with specific reference to the impacts to Benton End House and Overbury Hall.

Benton End House has been assessed in terms of its historic associations, aesthetic values, communal value, evidential value and inter-visibility with the project. The Technical Note details the relationship to the landscape representations reflected in the *oeuvre* of the East Anglian School of Art. It is noted that the presence of existing overhead lines was in place during much of the operation of the school. The assessment concludes that the impact on the heritage asset (including the cultural associations) is assessed as having a neutral effect.

Overbury Hall is associated with John Constable's sketch of the house in 1815. The project would therefore not affect this historic aspect of the heritage value of the listed building. There have been changes to the listed building and new buildings within its curtilage which partly screen the house from the existing overhead lines located to its north. For these reasons, the impact on the heritage asset (including the cultural associations) is assessed as having a minor adverse effect.

Conclusion

The assessment concluded that these permanent historic cultural associations, which form part of the heritage value of the listed buildings, would not be harmed through the project which would affect their settings to varying degrees.

The residual effects on Benton End House and Overbury Hall were not considered to be so serious that it would lead to an inability to appreciate or understand them or their relationships to their settings or their historic associations with historic artists or works of art. Neither of the effects on these heritage assets are considered to result in substantial harm to the setting of the listed buildings.

1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose of the Technical Note

- 1.1.1 This Technical Note has been produced to provide supporting information and context to explain the assessment of the cultural associations in relation to the application for development consent on the Bramford to Twinstead Reinforcement (the project). The Technical Note considers the known cultural associations with individual artists, artistic movements and individual works of art in the Brett Valley and in particular focuses on the Grade II* Listed Benton End and the Grade II Listed Overbury Hall.
- 1.1.2 This Technical Note signposts to where cultural associations were considered within the assessment presented within the Environmental Statement (ES) and then goes on to present supporting information that supports these conclusions. The cultural associations understandably span the assessments of landscape and visual and the historic environment. The assessment presented in this Technical Note seeks to draw together these strands whilst avoiding double counting of effects which could occur when assessing the individual topic areas.

1.2 Relevant Policy

- 1.2.1 The current designated Overarching National Policy Statement for Energy (EN-1) (Department of Energy and Climate Change, 2011) states in paragraph 5.8.2:
- ‘The historic environment includes all aspects of the environment resulting from the interaction between people and places through time, including all surviving physical remains of past human activity, whether visible, buried or submerged, landscaped and planted or managed flora. Those elements of the historic environment that hold value to this and future generations because of their historic, archaeological, architectural or artistic interest are called ‘heritage assets’. A heritage asset may be any building, monument, site, place, area or landscape, or any combination of these. The sum of the heritage interests that a heritage asset holds is referred to as its significance’.*
- 1.2.2 The latest version of draft Overarching National Policy Statement for Energy (EN-1) (Department for Energy Security and Net Zero, 2023) includes the paragraph from the current designated EN-1 noted in paragraph 1.2.1 in paragraph 5.9.2 and 5.9.3 but also includes an additional sentence in paragraph 5.9.3 to say that: *‘Significance derives not only from a heritage asset’s physical presence, but also from its setting’.*
- 1.2.3 The National Planning Practice Guidance (Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, 2023) states in Annex 2: Glossary that *‘Significance (for heritage policy): The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. The interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset’s physical presence, but also from its setting.’*
- 1.2.4 The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act) 1990, establishes in Section 66(1), in the determination of applications affecting Listed Buildings, that:
- ‘...in considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority, or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.’*

1.3 Cultural Associations and Setting

- 1.3.1 Setting is described by the National Planning Policy Framework (Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, 2023) glossary as:
- ‘The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral’.*
- 1.3.2 Historic England’s Good Practice Advice in Planning 3 (GPA3): The Setting of Heritage Assets (Historic England, 2017) states:
- ‘Setting is the surroundings in which an asset is experienced, and may therefore be more extensive than its curtilage. All heritage assets have a setting, irrespective of the form in which they survive and whether they are designated or not.*
- The extent and importance of setting is often expressed by reference to visual considerations. Although views of, or from, an asset will play an important part, the way in which we experience an asset in its setting is also influenced by other environmental factors such as noise, dust and vibration from other land uses in the vicinity, and by our understanding of the historic relationship between places. For example, buildings that are in close proximity but are not visible from each other may have a historic or aesthetic connection that amplifies the experience of the significance of each.’*
- 1.3.3 As these two references note, the setting of a listed building comprises both physical elements and more intangible elements, such as associations with artists, writers, artworks and folklore. These intangible elements often relate to physical, tangible elements of the landscape setting. For instance, loss of a feature recorded within a notable artwork could lead to loss of a heritage asset’s aesthetic value or historic legibility as well its value to the local community as measured in communal value. It is the data collection, valuing and quantification of these heritage attributes which are the specific focus of this Technical Note.
- 1.3.4 When assessing impacts within the setting of a heritage asset, it should be noted that all professional guidance considers the impact of any development in how changes to the setting effects the heritage value of the asset itself. It is the effects of the proposed development, whether beneficial or harmful, on that significance or on the ability to appreciate it that is assessed, as detailed in GPA3 (Historic England, 2017). The assessment evaluates the resultant degree of harm or benefit to the significance of the heritage asset from change within the setting.
- 1.3.5 In this report, setting is assessed in terms of both the visual and historic setting of the listed buildings. The former includes views to, and from, these listed buildings which include their immediate environs, and the historic setting also comprises the surviving parts of the landscape any relationships it has to historic or artistic associations.

2. Assessment of Cultural Associations

2.1 References in the Environmental Statement

- 2.1.1 As noted at Examination, ES Chapter 8: Historic Environment [APP-076] provides a summary of the local associations of the area with John Constable, Thomas Gainsborough, John Nash, Alfred Munnings, Sir Cedric Morris and the East Anglian School of Painting and Drawing. As such these intangible aspects form part of the 'baseline heritage data' against which impacts were measured.
- 2.1.2 Benton End House and Overbury Hall are listed buildings primarily designated for their architectural and historic interest, and their noted artistic associations form part of the associative historic interest of the buildings. As such these intangible historic associations were taken into account in assessing their overall heritage value and the impact of the project in the assessment presented in ES Chapter 8: Historic Environment [APP-076].
- 2.1.3 In addition, Table 2.2 of ES Appendix 6.1: Landscape and Visual Methodology [APP-097] includes reference to how any notable associations with particular people, such as artists or writers, were considered in valuing the landscape as part of the overall assessment. Paragraph 2.1.4 references the *'lush lowland character of the floodplain meadows and pastures adjacent to the Rivers Stour, Brett and Box epitomise the Dedham Vale landscape and express many of the aspects and elements depicted by artists including John Constable, Sir Alfred Munnings, Thomas Gainsborough, and John Nash'*.
- 2.1.4 These historic cultural and artistic associations with the wider historic landscape and the Brett Valley, around Benton End House and Overbury Hall, associated with the East Anglian School of Art and John Constable's work, were therefore assessed as part of the baseline for the landscape and visual impact assessment (LVIA), primarily as part of Landscape Character Area (LCA) 5 Suffolk Valley Meadowlands and LCA 5b which covers the valley floor of the River Brett.
- 2.1.5 Section 3.5 of ES Appendix 6.3: Assessment of Effects on Landscape Character [APP-100] presents the assessment of effects on LCA 5b. This concludes in paragraph 3.5.40 that the removal of the existing 132kV and presence of the new 400kV overhead line along broadly the same alignment would have an overall adverse effect on the landscape within this LCA. It is anticipated that the magnitude of change would be small. Taking account of the high landscape sensitivity, the overall operational effects of the project on the landscape within LCA 5b would be minor adverse (not significant).
- 2.1.6 The LVIA also examined the visual impacts of the project from various viewpoints. From a location close to Benton End Farm at Viewpoint C-10 it identified the removal of the existing 132kV overhead line and presence of the new 400kV overhead line along broadly the same alignment as resulting in larger 400kV pylons which would be more noticeable despite being slightly further from the viewpoint.
- 2.1.7 The assessment examined visual impacts of the project from a location close to Overbury Hall, at Viewpoint C-03. Although this viewpoint faces eastward, the supplementary photograph from the viewpoint looked southwest, towards Overbury Hall.
- 2.1.8 Both assessments conclude that the removal of the existing 132kV overhead line and presence of the new 400kV overhead line would introduce noticeably larger pylons within the Brett Valley and increase the influence of high voltage electricity infrastructure. The resultant effects would not be significant.

- 2.1.9 This section demonstrates that cultural associations were considered in both the landscape and visual and the historic environment assessments presented in the ES.

2.2 Benton End House

Description of Benton End House

- 2.2.1 Benton End House is in the Brett Valley and was first designated as a Grade II* Listed Building in 1950 (Historic England, Statutory List Description, Appendix A). The house is located on slightly raised ground, overlooking the meandering Brett River and the Brett Valley, which are to the west of the house. The house and outbuildings are shown on the OS First Edition mapping of 1886 (Suffolk, Map Sheet LXXXI.2) where they are annotated as 'Rookery Farm'.
- 2.2.2 The listed building description records the house as a 16th century two-storey building with later additions, constructed in timber-framing and plastered with its front wings extending north and south and its rear wing extending east. The front has been largely altered and includes 18th century features. The architect is believed to have been Sir Peter Cheyney (Historic England, Statutory List Description). Benton End House was assessed as having an overall High heritage value in ES Appendix 8.2: Historic Environment Impact Assessment [APP-127].
- 2.2.3 The outbuildings within the curtilage of Benton End House are separately protected as a Grade II Listed Building and were first designated in 1972; the outbuildings were included for their group value with the main house. The outbuildings form a range of 17th century and 18th century buildings which are mainly one-storey, red brick, with part timber-framing, forming barns and a granary.
- 2.2.4 The gardens are not mentioned in the list description and are not included in the Register of Historic Parks and Gardens of special historic interest in England. However, the gardens very much have an associative historic value with the house and outbuildings, and form part of their immediate setting, within the curtilage of the main buildings. These associations contribute to the legibility of the historic buildings through their aesthetic, communal, evidential and historic value.

Cultural Associations of Benton End House

- 2.2.5 The nationally significant artist, art teacher and plantsman, Sir Cedric Lockwood Morris (1889–1982) bought Benton End House from Sir Alfred Sainsbury in 1939. Morris had founded the East Anglian School of Painting and Drawing (EASPD) ('the School') (1937–82) at a house in Dedham, but following a devastating fire in 1939, moved the school to Benton End House in Hadleigh together with the artist, Arthur Lett-Haines, known as 'Lett', (1894–1978) who was his lifelong partner (Garden Museum, 2023).
- 2.2.6 The School had originally been established with the help of the artists John Aldridge, Edward Bawden and Eric Ravilious who were all members of the 'Seven and Five Society' but had become disillusioned when the chairman Ben Nicholson restricted the society's exhibitions to the showing of abstract work only.
- 2.2.7 The EASPD, which became more of a bohemian artistic community than a formal school, flourished throughout the Second World War and for four decades afterwards. Benton End House became, to quote the artist Glyn Morgan, '*a place apart, where painting is the most important thing in life*' (Lowkes, 2022). Students at the school lived and studied at the house and it was associated with a diverse range of influential 20th century artists,

writers, musicians and botanists. Two of the School's most notable *alumni* are Lucian Freud (1922–2011) and Maggi Hambling (b. 1945) (Gray, 2022).

- 2.2.8 The gardens were an important part of the Morris' work as he preferred to be known as an 'Artist Plantsman' and was famous for breeding tall, bearded irises. Morris was also an avid plant-hunter and he amassed a huge collection of rare and unusual plants at Benton End House. Each winter he would travel to places such as Portugal and Turkey to paint and find plant species that he would then establish in the garden at Benton End House. The house still has its walled garden filled with roses, honeysuckles and irises. Morris made the gardens at Benton End House as influential, in its day, as Sissinghurst and it became one of the first modern gardens of naturalistic design, based on Morris's artistic sensibility.
- 2.2.9 In paintings by Morris, the principal subject of interest are his plants and vegetables, their colour and texture, where the landscape is generally secondary, although sometimes Benton End House is shown in the background. In the landscape focused works by Morris and his students within the environs of the School, the principal vista is most often directed over the Brett Valley, to the west, sometimes with Benton End House and gardens as part of the landscape; this is the most scenic view from the house and gardens as it features the meandering Brett River.
- 2.2.10 Following the death of Lett's in 1978 and then Morris in 1982, the School was discontinued and the house and garden were sold on. Benton End House was eventually bought and gifted to the Benton End House and Garden Trust in 2021 and is currently undergoing renovations with a proposed re-opening of the walled garden in 2026. The Trust refers to Benton End House as '*An artist's home, a plantsman's paradise, Benton End House and Garden will once again become a place of creativity, learning, and intellectual freedom*' (Skellorn, 2023).
- 2.2.11 Throughout his career, Morris painted portraits, landscapes, still life, flowers, vegetables and animal studies. He painted using oils, in a very direct way using bold impasto colour and today he is probably best known for his flower paintings, particularly of irises. Many of the art works located within the grounds, principally Morris' work, feature elements of the gardens, which were an obsession of his work, especially the irises. The school encouraged individuality and painting *en plein air* and many of the students at Benton End House also produced paintings of the house and its gardens, some of which include landscape studies in, and around, the Brett Valley.

Assessment of Benton End House

- 2.2.12 The existing 400kV overhead line is located approximately 150m south of Benton End House, at its closest point. This was installed in the 1960s, after the listing of Benton End House. Benton End House and gardens were also occupied by the School from 1940, until it was discontinued in 1982. This means that, as such, the School was in operation during the time when the existing 400kV overhead line was constructed.
- 2.2.13 The existing 132kV overhead line, which would be replaced with the proposed 400kV overhead line, is parallel to the 400kV overhead line but to the south and approximately 330m south of Benton End House at its closest point.
- 2.2.14 The primary reasons for the designation of Benton End House are its special architectural and historic value. The artistic and cultural associations were also taken into consideration as forming part of their historic associative value when assessing the impact of the project on the historic environment. The assessment concluded that

heritage values of the house, outbuildings and gardens would not be affected in any way by the proposed replacement of the overhead line within the setting of the listed building.

- 2.2.15 The use of the Benton End House by the EASPD and its associations within their *oeuvre* was implicit in informing the assessment of the historic associative, communal and aesthetic values of the property. However, these are historic and artistic associations, although intangible, are permanent, and form part of the listed building's irrevocable heritage value. These artistic and historic associations would not be affected by the proposed replacement of the overhead line within the setting of the listed building.
- 2.2.16 Due to the orientation of Benton End House, the main house and grounds overlook the Brett River and Brett Valley to the west, and there is very limited inter-visibility with the landscape where the existing overhead lines are located to the south. The most scenic views from Benton End House feature the Brett River as it winds its way north to south along the Brett Valley. For this reason, of the most paintings and drawings where Benton End House figures as the main subject, are principally orientated to the westward, with the landscape in the background being away from the existing overhead lines. It is the scenic vistas to the westward which are those views which are reflected primarily in the landscape paintings of the EASPD, usually featuring Benton End House and gardens in the foreground or middle distance.
- 2.2.17 The existing 132kV overhead line, which would be replaced by the new 400kV overhead line, is screened from Benton End House by intervening outbuildings and mature trees and would be located behind the existing retained 400kV overhead line. Whereas there are some very limited glimpsed views south-westward, towards the existing infrastructure, the distance to the proposed replacement overhead line means that the effect of the project on Benton End House would be very limited and is therefore assessed as having a neutral effect.

2.3 Overbury Hall

Description of Overbury Hall

- 2.3.1 Overbury Hall is located to the west of Upper Layham and is a Grade II Listed Building, which was first designated in 1958. The house is, in origin, a 16th to 17th century, two-storey building and has an upper, jettied storey on the south end with exposed joists (Historic England, Statutory List Description). It has distinctive chimney stacks made up of four, grouped, octagonal shafts on square bases, which have been rebuilt at the top. Despite the original age of the hall house, the list description mentions that it has been greatly modernised and rebuilt. Overbury Hall was assessed as having an overall High heritage value in ES Appendix 8.2: Historic Environment Impact Assessment [APP-127].
- 2.3.2 In addition, a later, and larger, two-storey Victorian brick building was constructed immediately to the north-west of the listed building. More recently, modern prefabricated agricultural outbuildings have also been built between 100m and 140m to the north of Overbury Hall. These agricultural buildings are located very close to the existing 132kV overhead line, with the existing 400kV line a further 90m to the north; the two lines are roughly parallel along this section.

Cultural Associations of Overbury Hall

- 2.3.3 The known cultural associations with Overbury Hall are confined to the nationally significant artist, John Constable. Constable produced a pencil sketch study, dated 20th

August 1815, of Overbury Hall, which is now within the Victoria and Albert Museum collection. In 1815 Constable exhibited five paintings and three drawings at the Royal Academy. Constable's mother had died early in 1815 and he had been in Suffolk until May that year. After his exhibition at the Royal Academy in London, Constable returned to Suffolk on 6 July, producing the Overbury Hall sketch in August. Constable remained in Suffolk until at least December 1815, due to his father's serious illness. The sketch was donated to the V&A by Constable's daughter, Isabel Constable.

- 2.3.4 The view captured in Constable's sketch is looking southwest towards the house and focuses on the architecture and grandeur of the northern elevation of the house as the subject rather than on any elements of its wider background landscape or sky effects. Constable's sketch does show detailing within the foreground topography including livestock and a large tree. Assessment of Overbury Hall
- 2.3.5 This historic association between Overbury Hall and Constable was implicit in the assessment of impacts on the setting of the Listed Building. As acknowledged by the list description, the house has been altered and extended over the intervening years but is still recognisable from the sketch. The sketch is based on the view looking south-west towards the house, away from the existing overhead lines and would not therefore be interrupted by the proposed 400kV overhead line, which is located to the north of the listed building.
- 2.3.6 The setting of Overbury Hall has obviously been modified by the addition of later buildings as well the introduction of the existing overhead lines. The construction of these later buildings, as well as the intervening tree cover, provide some screening and separation between the Overbury Hall and the proposed 400kV overhead line.
- 2.3.7 Since the proposals in this location represent the replacement of an existing 132kV overhead line with slightly taller but more spaced out 400kV pylons, it has been concluded that the project would introduce a minimal additional visual intrusion. This would result in an effect assessed as minor adverse and would therefore not be significant.

2.4 Historic Landscape Characterisation

- 2.4.1 Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) is a method of broadly characterising the historic landscape. The HLC presented in ES Chapter 8: Historic Environment [APP-076] and ES Appendix 8.2: Historic Environment Impact Assessment [APP-127] was based on Suffolk County Council's Historic Landscape characterisation data.
- 2.4.2 The HLC evaluation exercise avoids immersion in individual heritage assets, such as listed buildings, but steers the assessment towards an understanding of the historic development of a landscape and its inherited historic character and 'time-depth'. The HLC aids the understanding of historic activity within the landscape and the connections and the inter-relationships between places. This provides the context in which individual heritage assets, such as historic buildings and their settings, can be more widely understood.
- 2.4.3 The Suffolk HLC study (Suffolk County Council, 2008) characterises the historic landscapes of Suffolk by mapping them in a range of defined Historic Landscape Types (HLTs). Each defined landscape area has been given a summary of its present-day land use and its historic origin (the 'time-depth'). These are set out as 'broad types' (their basic characterisation) and sub-types, that give a closer definition than the broad types.

Benton End House Area

- 2.4.4 Benton End House and its accompanying outbuildings and garden setting are located within an HLT which is characterised, in broad terms, as ‘town’ and has a sub-type of ‘10.2 built up area – town’ (Suffolk County Council 2008). This summarises the area of Benton End House, its gardens and outbuildings as a suburban area of Hadleigh. The HLT is described as a ‘large settlement with urban functions. Historically, this sub-type includes the places that had functioning markets.’
- 2.4.5 The River Brett valley, which Benton End House overlooks to the west, is the subject of many of the artistic representations from the former students of the EASPD and was characterised within the HLT as a broad type ‘meadow and managed wetland’ and has a ‘meadow’ sub-type category. In the HLC study (Suffolk County Council, 2008) this is described as a ‘seasonally wet grassland that is mown for hay and/or grazed by animals. Normally found alongside rivers and streams and characteristically takes the form of long and narrow land parcels that run parallel to the watercourses. Often hedged on the dry-land side, but with ditched internal sub-divisions that often have a drainage function.’
- 2.4.6 To the south of Benton End House, and also to the west of the River Brett valley meadow, the area is characterised as a ‘post-1950 agricultural landscape’ HLT through which most of the Order Limits are located within 500m of the house. The HLT sub-type is ‘boundary loss from random fields’ which is described in the HLC study (Suffolk County Council, 2008) as ‘20th century boundary loss from fields formerly of Sub-type 1.1 (random fields): Landscapes made up of fields that have an irregular pattern (i.e. without any dominant axis). Many were in existence by the medieval period but could be earlier. Boundaries usually take the form of species-rich hedges (normally coppiced not laid) with associated ditches and banks. Areas with this field pattern are probably some of our earliest farming landscapes.’
- 2.4.7 Directly to the east of Benton End House the broad type HLT is defined as an area of ‘pre-18th century enclosure’. It has a ‘random fields’ HLT, and a sub-type of ‘Landscapes made up of fields that have an irregular pattern (i.e. without any dominant axis). Many were in existence by the medieval period, but could be earlier. Boundaries usually take the form of species-rich hedges (normally coppiced not laid) with associated ditches and banks. Areas with this field pattern are probably some of our earliest farming landscapes (Suffolk County Council 2008)’.
- 2.4.8 There is also a small HLT area with an ‘Industrial’ broad type with a ‘current industrial landscape’ sub-type, which are ‘in active use for an industrial purpose’ (Suffolk County Council, 2008).
- 2.4.9 These HLT units mark a landscape around the house which has evolved over many centuries and within which Benton End House has been a permanent feature since the 16th century, having evolved alongside the surrounding landscape with later additions. The artistic representations of the property capture some of the local landscape in the mid-20th century.
- 2.4.10 Paragraph 5.3.6 of ES Appendix 8.2: Historic Environment Impact Assessment [APP-127] states that the additional modern infrastructure within the historic landscape would detract from the HLC units, given that the proposed 400kV overhead line would be larger in scale than the existing 132kV line which it would be replacing. This would therefore amount to a small adverse impact and a minor adverse effect, which is not significant.

Overbury Hall Area

- 2.4.11 The Grade II Listed Overbury Hall is located in a broad type HLT unit classed as a *'built up area'*, which appears to define the property's curtilage, taking into account the modern additions to the west of the historic building. The sub-type classification is defined as a *'built up area of unspecified type or size'* which is a standard type for private residential properties within the HLC dataset (Suffolk County Council, 2008).
- 2.4.12 The property curtilage is surrounded by the pre-18th century broad type HLT classification with the random field sub-type described as *'Landscapes made up of fields that have an irregular pattern (i.e. without any dominant axis). Many were in existence by the medieval period, but could be earlier. Boundaries usually take the form of species-rich hedges (normally coppiced not laid) with associated ditches and banks. Areas with this field pattern are probably some of our earliest farming landscapes'*. The Order Limits pass through this landscape type immediately to the north of the property.
- 2.4.13 Further to the north of Overbury Hall (both within, and to the north of, the Order Limits) is a *'post-1950 agricultural landscape'* broad type HLT which has a sub-type of *'boundary loss from random fields: 20th century boundary loss from fields formerly of Sub-type 1.1 (random fields): Landscapes made up of fields that have an irregular pattern (i.e. without any dominant axis). Many were in existence by the medieval period, but could be earlier. Boundaries usually take the form of species-rich hedges (normally coppiced not laid) with associated ditches and banks. Areas with this field pattern are probably some of our earliest farming landscapes'*.
- 2.4.14 To the west and south of the property is an area of HLT broad type *'meadow or managed wetland'* with a *'meadow'* sub-type described as: *'Seasonally wet grassland that is mown for hay and/or grazed by animals. Normally found alongside rivers and streams and characteristically takes the form of long and narrow land parcels that run parallel to the watercourses. Often hedged on the dry-land side, but with ditched internal sub-divisions that often have a drainage function'*.
- 2.4.15 The property dates originally from the 16th century and has evolved in its form together with the surrounding landscape, which exhibits strong roots in the medieval period with even earlier possible origins. The 1815 pencil drawing of the house represents a *'snapshot'* of the property from a particular moment in time which is part of a continuum in the evolution of the property.
- 2.4.16 Paragraph 5.3.6 of ES Appendix 8.2: Historic Environment Impact Assessment [**APP-127**] states that the additional modern infrastructure within the historic landscape would detract from the HLC units, given that the proposed 400kV overhead line would be larger in scale than the existing 132kV line which it would be replacing. This would therefore amount to a small adverse impact and a minor adverse effect, which is not significant.

3. Conclusion

- 3.1.1 This Technical Note presents the historical analysis of the significance of Benton End and Overbury Hall in the context of the artists and artworks known to be associated with these properties. It provides analysis of the influence of the adjoining landscape on those artists to help establish the understanding of context/setting.
- 3.1.2 At both locations in the Brett Valley, the existing overhead lines form part of the baseline environment, as described in ES Appendix 6.1: Landscape and Visual Methodology [APP-097]. This is supported by the evidence presented within this Technical Note that the existing overhead lines were present in the landscape when Benton End House was still being used as a school and since the lines were built after the building was listed. Therefore, the assessment does not consider the impact of the existing line on appreciation of this landscape.
- 3.1.3 The assessment considers the cumulative effect of the proposed 400kV overhead line with the existing 400kV overhead line. However, it should be noted that this is in the context of the proposed 400kV overhead line replacing the existing 132kV overhead line (albeit with taller less frequent pylons) within the landscape and would not be a new or additional overhead line.
- 3.1.4 The assessment undertaken examines the impact of the project on the cultural associations in the Brett Valley with specific reference to Benton End House and Overbury Hall. The assessment concluded that the cultural associations, which form part of the intangible heritage value of the listed buildings, would not be harmed through the project.
- 3.1.5 The assessment has concluded that there would be a neutral effect on Benton End House due to the lack of impact on its historic associations, lack of impact on its aesthetic value, and lack of inter-visibility with the project.
- 3.1.6 In the assessment of Overbury Hall, which is associated with John Constable's work in 1815, the view of the house captured in his sketch would not be affected and nor would these permanent historic associations. The project would therefore not affect this aspect of the heritage value of the listed building. Though still recognisable, there have been changes to the listed building and new buildings have been built within its curtilage, which partly screen the house from the existing overhead lines located to the north. For these reasons the impact on the heritage asset was assessed as having a minor adverse effect.
- 3.1.7 Neither of the effects on Benton End House or Overbury Hall are considered to be so serious that it would lead to an inability to appreciate or understand them or their relationships to their settings or their historic associations with historic artists or works of art. Neither of the effects on these heritage assets are considered to result in substantial harm. The project effects fall below the levels of a serious impact on the significance of these heritage assets and would not seriously affect any key elements of their special architectural or historic interest.

References

Department for Energy, Security and Net Zero (2023) National Policy Statement (Energy) EN-1 (Presented to the Houses of Parliament pursuant to section 9(8) of the Planning Act 2008).

Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (2019) The National Planning Practice Guidance.

Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (2023) National Planning Policy Framework.

Department of Energy and Climate Change (2011) National Policy Statement (Energy) EN-1.

Furniss, E. Suffolk: Artist Maggi Hambling Defends the ‘Inspirational’ Brett Valley. East Anglian Daily Times

Garden Museum (2023) Benton End House and Gardens (available online).

Gray, S. (2022) Visual art: Life with Art: Benton End and the East Anglian School of Painting and Drawing. Church Times.

Historic England (2017) Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets.

Historic England (2022) National Heritage List for England (available online).

Lowkes, R. (2020) Painted Gardens and Restoring Benton End: An Interview with Bridget Pinchbeck. Available online at Sotheby's.

Skellorn, L (2023) ‘A Plantsman’s Paradise’ available online.

National Grid plc
National Grid House,
Warwick Technology Park,
Gallows Hill, Warwick.
CV34 6DA United Kingdom

Registered in England and Wales
No. 4031152
nationalgrid.com