



Planning Inspectorate
Arolygiaeth Gynllunio

Hearing Transcript

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| Project: | Norwich to Tilbury |
| Hearing: | Open Floor Hearing 1 (OFH1) - Session 2 - Part 2 |
| Date: | 11 February 2026 |

Please note: This document is intended to assist Interested Parties.

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The video recording published on the Planning Inspectorate project page is the primary record of the hearing.

00:00:05:02 - 00:00:24:17

The time is now 1121, and we will reconvene the meeting and restart the live stream. Um, our next group of five are Carl Owen, Andrew Buxton, who I believe is speaking on behalf of Alexandra McAdam, Paul Whittle, Jillian Whittle and Andrew Bullock. If you could either come forward or turn your screen on, please.

00:00:52:26 - 00:01:01:07

Thank you very much. Um, you each have, uh, three minutes and, um, I will start with Mr. Owen, please.

00:01:02:15 - 00:01:37:11

Thank you. Panel. I have a passionate fury for National Grid. What they plan to do to my family, my community, to the landscape and the wildlife. They are conniving and deceptive. Unregulated and unaccountable. They have ruined our lives and stolen our future. From the start, they chose to impose the most harmful infrastructure through an area that is rich in rare and endangered flora and fauna. Our great crested newts get concrete shoes as skylarks get electrocuted.

00:01:37:13 - 00:02:10:27

But our bats don't get a tunnel. They even plan to fence off and floodlight the site like a 180 kilometre Berlin Wall for wildlife. My wife, our four kids and I live in a 400 year old cottage on a flat, open plateau surrounded by fields, hedgerows, veteran trees and ancient woodland. We have stunning views of the countryside and the abundant wildlife, with clear sightlines for many miles in all directions. There is no way to mitigate 50 metre high pylons in this landscape.

00:02:10:29 - 00:02:43:04

They will be visible for miles and also enclose our forever home on three sides, coming closer than 100m. Imported steel towers and humming overhead lines will dwarf and dominate our tiny cottage. The years long construction phase will be a living nightmare. We don't even have access to the road as the red boundary lines block our driveway. We will need to ask Gestapo for permission to leave our home. And if allowed to pass, we must cross four more Checkpoint Charlies in just the first mile.

00:02:43:14 - 00:03:19:15

Everyone familiar with our predicament has said we are most harmed by this proposal and should receive compensation. That reflects this before a spade hits dirt. So we can take our home down, brick by brick and move it to safety. I urge you, panel, to come down and to see just how damaging and dangerous National Grid can be. For example, the backs and high pressure gas pipeline that supplies London is just 50m from our cottage. Quite literally in our backyard. The pylon route crosses the gas pipeline with a potential blast zone of our home.

00:03:19:19 - 00:03:49:28

The crossing point should be further away for health and safety alone. Plus, X marks the spot for bad Vlad Putin. The world has changed and undergrounding is now the only safe option. If it's not war or terrorism. There's hurricanes, floods, wildfires. Reducing our 1% of global emissions will not stop extreme weather events. Putting the cables underground or undersea will offer greater protection and security for this country and my family. Mrs.

00:03:50:00 - 00:04:16:28

Miliband just objected to a five storey building in her street because she said it was too big, not in keeping with the surroundings and detrimental to the local wildlife. Our objection is 17 storeys high and all of the above applies the hypocrisy. One rule for them, another for us. Wrong tech, wrong place. Thank you.

00:04:17:18 - 00:04:19:03

Thank you very much, Mr. Rowan.

00:04:21:04 - 00:04:37:01

Excuse me. We asked at the beginning for no clapping or cheering or booing, so if you could please respect that. Thank you very much. That'd be very helpful. Um, Mr. Buxton, I believe you. Are you. Can you just confirm if you're speaking on behalf of yourself or, um, Alexandra McClean McAdam, please?

00:04:37:19 - 00:04:40:28

I'm speaking on behalf of my wife, Alexandra McAdam.

00:04:41:00 - 00:04:43:28

Thank you very much. You're very welcome. And you have three minutes.

00:04:44:00 - 00:05:15:02

We are members of a family which farm and own a cluster of eight listed buildings south of Ipswich. Included in the cluster is a grade one Scheduled monument, a grade one listed church, a grade two star tithe barn, and five grade two listed buildings or monuments in the curtilage. Historic England State that is one of the earliest brick structures in England and is of national importance.

00:05:15:23 - 00:05:51:23

Pevsner describes which is actually a fortified house as of great historical importance, and one of the forerunners of English domestic architecture. The Suffolk Institute described the cluster as nationally important heritage assets. The NPF definition of significance includes setting and communal assessments. The setting at Little Wenham is exceptional, with a complex of listed buildings covering the development of domestic farm architecture from the mid 13th century to the mid-16th century.

00:05:52:02 - 00:06:24:06

There are frequent interested visitors. However, the complex is not even shown on the maps that National Grid have published in their submission, which documents listed buildings along the line. The maps show only two of the eight listed buildings and don't even show the castle as scheduled. This shows a disregard for one of the most significant heritage sites in the UK, and means that material information has not been taken into account.

00:06:25:00 - 00:06:56:27

The 2025 consultation route moved the line away, but it has ignored the Holford rules and the view from the north west did not change, including the J 27 angle tower and the J 35 cable sealing end. We have submitted an alteration, but that has not been responded to by a bi national grid. The alteration Straightens out the line and does away with the A27 angle to completely.

00:06:57:26 - 00:07:28:03

I'm making these points to request that heritage issues are properly assessed, and that they are discussed in face to face sessions. National grid have submitted a draft statement of Common Good, which states that in their view, the project would not result in substantial harm. It is clear that they have not taken account of the higher levels of care required by the Ancient Monuments and Archaeology Act 1979, and they have also ignored the Holford rules.

00:07:28:26 - 00:07:35:22

We have also been informed by Historic England. They have not yet finished their assessment. Thank you.

00:07:36:11 - 00:07:41:12

Thank you very much, Mr. Buxton. We now move on to Mr. Whittle, please.

00:07:44:29 - 00:07:56:15

Good afternoon. I know it's not still. Good morning. Um, my name is Paul Whittle. I don't think you're interested in mind. Interested party reference number. I can give it if you like.

00:07:56:17 - 00:07:57:16

It's fine. Thank you.

00:07:57:18 - 00:08:27:27

Good. Uh, I'd just like to highlight one example of what National Grid have done. Uh, the National Grid Application and Consultation does not show an existing UK power networks 132 kV overhead line, which runs along the eastern edge of the proposed RT substation site with five large pylons, not quite 50m but not far off.

00:08:28:15 - 00:09:02:04

Nor does it show the existing Little Bromley substation immediately to the south of the proposed RT substation. This is the making of a wire scape, but no mention is made in the national grid. Application of the wire scape that will be created. Nor is any mention made of the close proximity of the North Poles and five estuaries substations, which will convert the DC current from the wind farms into AC. In addition, there are proposals for battery storage sites and the Taishan Interconnector building.

00:09:02:20 - 00:09:11:20

These will all add to the industrialisation of this rural corner of Ardley, which is extremely annoying. Uh.

00:09:13:13 - 00:09:53:04

Moving on. Uh, I'd like to highlight there is a grade two listed historical farmhouse in the immediate vicinity of the proposed RT substation. Instead of trying to reduce the effect on the property. National Grid have done their very best to increase the damage by drawing the red line, as I call it. Tie it up against the west, south and east boundaries of the property. In addition, National Grid have refused to

reduce the noise from the Artes substation by building it underground, as they have agreed to do so at the Orsett substation location, I suspect, because there's a bunch of golfers involved next door.

00:09:54:04 - 00:10:00:17

These actions have blighted any chance of the owners selling up and downsizing. Now their family have left home.

00:10:02:25 - 00:10:30:17

Apparently there is no discretionary purchase scheme offered by National Grid, which is perhaps surprising, bearing in mind their moral, at least moral, responsibility to safeguard the historic buildings. National grid have themselves stated that their project introduces tall infrastructure within the setting of the listed building. Not to mention the noise, and there is a significant negative effect with no suitable mitigation to reduce this.

00:10:32:11 - 00:10:56:23

That's called giving up without even trying. In my book. Furthermore, the National Grid plan envisages both overhead and underground cables crossing hunker down lane in the same narrow 50 yard gap, which is much less than what it's supposed to be. Which will involve the loss of mature oak trees and the blocking of a popular walking, cycling and riding route.

00:10:56:25 - 00:10:59:19

If I could ask you to bring your text to a close, please.

00:10:59:21 - 00:11:11:05

I would suggest a site visit by inspectors would be useful so they can have the opportunity to appreciate the full extent to which the National Grid application has breached the Holford rules. Thank you.

00:11:11:07 - 00:11:23:29

Thank you. I just refer again to our previous comments about the ability for people to suggest locations for a company's site visits by the deadline one. Okay. Thank you. Uh, thank you very much. And, Mrs. Whittle.

00:11:27:25 - 00:11:59:29

I would emphasize that we are not NIMBYs, naysayers or blockers, as the government calls us. Nobody along the whole length of the proposed Norwich to Tilbury line would deny the need for more electricity to take the country forward. But National Grid's proposal to use pylons is data technology and there are far better ways to achieve net zero in a well-thought out and coordinated plan. National grid have shown vast incompetence in their consultations. There has been no consulting as they have predetermined that it will be pylons.

00:12:00:15 - 00:12:32:12

I have attended every consultation offered in my area, and each time our questions about alternatives have been fended off with bland replies. National grid failed at the initial stages, and further hearings to consider alternatives are required. One of our local consultations was even arranged for the day of,

and in the same road as, and only a quarter of a mile from the tendering show. Inevitably, people were put off attending because of the queues caused by show traffic. Deliberate failure by National Grid.

00:12:33:14 - 00:13:04:21

Ardley village is situated in flat countryside. The harms caused to this community are substantial. Ardley would have a total of 20 pylons within the parish. They would be visible from the to the 40 listed buildings and all dwellings in the village centre and surrounding area. They would also be visible from the Dedham Vale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, just one mile away, with pylon TB 12 less than a mile away. National grid has failed to listen to the concerns of this community.

00:13:05:00 - 00:13:35:08

The stress and mental health issues caused by this callous attitude cannot be emphasized enough. Ardley also has a large farming community. The area stands to lose a total of 195 hectares, or nearly 500 acres of prime agricultural land, as it would become one huge industrial unit with the country's need for food security. This is more than just a harm. It is a very real danger. Failure by National Grid again.

00:13:35:26 - 00:14:08:04

My husband and I have tried to communicate with National Grid. We met with one of their representatives and one from Fisher German on 19th June 2024, along with our agent. National grid promised to come back to us with answers to our questions and queries within two weeks. Since that date, we have heard nothing. Failure to address our concerns. We had a second meeting a year later with two representatives from Fischer German, about required access to a small part of our land. The representatives could not answer our questions as they had not been given the information by National Grid.

00:14:08:06 - 00:14:30:09

A waste of time. Another failure regarding the siting of the Ardley substation. National grid's proposals are in breach of every single one of the Horlock rules, as well as in breach of keeping visual noise and other environmental effects to a minimum failure, and at least three of the Holford rules are breached. Another failure. Thank you.

00:14:30:27 - 00:14:36:03

Thank you very much. And finally, for this group of five. Mr. Bullock, please.

00:14:42:04 - 00:14:46:27

Good boy. If you could turn your microphone on with the button, please. Thank you very much.

00:14:48:04 - 00:14:50:15

I'm a dairy and arable farmer in the parishes.

00:14:50:17 - 00:15:23:06

Of Cotton and Mendelssohn. Farming is my passion and my life. But I am also passionate about conservation on the farm. Today both my sons run the business with me, employing two full time staff and one part time. A typical small family farm. As the project stands now, we have six pylons on our land, which during the construction will take out a third of our arable acreage. It was a huge shock

when we first learned about National Grid's plans. We immediately started to engage with National Grid and our agents, Fisher German.

00:15:23:22 - 00:15:57:03

Since then, we've responded to every consultation and had multiple private meetings seeking, seeking clarity and further detail at every step which has not been given. It is astonishing to think that National Grid can just tell you where and how they're going to destroy mine. My father's and now my son's. Lifetime's hard work and legacy. Without even trying to mitigate the impact by engaging with us, excuse me, and taking on our concerns.

00:15:57:05 - 00:16:01:16

We, we, the people who know this landscape better than anyone.

00:16:03:19 - 00:16:37:10

Aside from the consultation being only a consultation in name, the construction process is extremely alarming for us, particularly the construction and use of a whole road. It is proposed to bulldoze the topsoil and parts of the subsoil from our fields, and then lay hardcore to a width of eight metres with the mounds of soil and fencing. This scar will be over 20m wide, meaning the soil structure and viability will never be the same again.

00:16:38:00 - 00:17:08:03

From National Grid's own haul road data. This hard core could be between 200 and 710mm deep. So based on average hard core weights and 20 ton lorry loads, this is between 160 and 600 lorry loads of hard core per kilometre. The haul road covers over two kilometres on our land. Heavy lorries used during the construction will push the hard core into our heavy clay soils.

00:17:08:11 - 00:17:41:15

When the whole road is removed at the end of the project, at best 10% will be left in the soil. Anyone with intelligence would call this fly tipping on an industrial scale. There's already an existing track most of the length on our land, which runs parallel to the proposed haul road. Last year, the existing 400 kV power lines were upgraded to have three lines on each arm. This was done using steel track matting, which was simply unrolled and rolled up, allowing efficient clean access.

00:17:41:26 - 00:18:02:12

There are clearly better alternatives as already used by National Grid. Why are we not being offered this? Please come to our farm to see what we are trying to nurture and protect. Everyone knows there are much better alternatives to this proposed folly. Thank you.

00:18:03:02 - 00:18:10:23

Thank you very much, Mr. Bullock. And can I thank all of you for your participation this morning. And you may take your seats back in the audience. Thank you.

00:18:17:21 - 00:18:25:27

Next, I'm going to ask Susan Edwards, Mark Harper, Katherine Cocksure, Richard Bullock and Trevor Seddon to come forward. I believe you're all in the room.

00:18:48:29 - 00:18:54:15

Thank you and welcome. You all have three minutes and I'm going to start with Susan Edwards, please.

00:18:55:27 - 00:19:29:22

Thank you. There's an urgent need for some truth and integrity with regard to this proposal. At the beginning, this was portrayed as a green project. National grid quickly realized that they were on to a sticky wicket and it wasn't true. So the word green was removed from the marketing. The consultation was nothing of the sort. No alternatives were given or explored, only pylons. I saw for myself the little cartoon on the National Grid website about the importance of having a connected grid with interconnectors in the North Sea.

00:19:30:00 - 00:20:02:03

National grid have known this to be true for some time. Indeed, there have been recent press releases about us joining up with our European neighbours to put together better connectivity. But anyway, this little cartoon contradicted the narrative of the Norwich to Tilbury project and was quickly taken down on the EGL one project. National grid said in their blurb that they were rooting it under the sea to reduce the impact on communities.

00:20:02:17 - 00:20:13:00

If their why not here? I only feel really qualified to talk on my own patch. So here are some of the things that I have observed.

00:20:15:19 - 00:20:48:13

The proposed route forms a horseshoe around my village of Gillingham, which is contradicting the Holford rules. I then began to look at a document which shows the trees that are being removed. It's um, document 2.16. I was looking at the landscape on the west of the railway line, and knowing this patch very well, it struck me that, um, it wasn't a true representation. It was it was misleading. There were 23 green dot trees and four red ones.

00:20:48:20 - 00:21:18:28

None of the green drop trees are anything like as large as the red dot trees. Indeed, there are trees in the red shading which don't even appear with a dot um, that are way bigger than any of the green dotted trees. I hope that makes some sense. Um, it's just giving a simply misleading impression. Just designed to make it look like the landscape won't really suffer much. And that's simply not true. Come and see for yourself.

00:21:19:18 - 00:21:55:25

Thirdly, the initial baseline assessment for listed buildings. From the initial consultation in that document, it said that the operational effects for property 1180592. would be a significantly negative effect whilst on the document. Now included in this submission, it says that it's lower than or less, lower or less than substantial harm for this same property. And just out of interest, I looked at the other properties on that same page and they had similarly been downgraded.

00:21:56:22 - 00:22:01:10

What's changed was the baseline assessment simply unpalatable?

00:22:01:25 - 00:22:04:04

If I could ask you to draw to a conclusion, please.

00:22:04:06 - 00:22:13:23

It's not just me, my family and my neighbors who will be significantly negatively, negatively impacted. It's the ecology and natural environment which will be devastated.

00:22:15:17 - 00:22:28:23

We've had enough national cover ups and scandals. The truth are always out. Let's hope that sooner rather than too later. Let's have a look at some other sensible options. GBTC and going under the sea. Thank you.

00:22:28:25 - 00:22:31:28

Thank you very much. Next is Mr. Harper, please.

00:22:34:19 - 00:22:41:00

If I could ask you to turn on your microphone, please, with the button, that'd be perfect. All right. All right. That's it. Thank you.

00:22:41:14 - 00:23:13:02

I must apologize. I've got absolutely nothing prepared for this. But like most people, we're just expecting the powers that be to over rulers, regardless of what we say. And I agree wholeheartedly with all the earlier speakers. And I'd just like to say where I live. Um, it's a 600 year old house. Absolutely beautiful farm. Uh, we are to be surrounded, but not surrounded.

00:23:13:10 - 00:23:50:08

Um, essentially 120 degrees of the farm will be surrounded. There's various pylons upon the farm. And according to the old man that farms it, as the land will be just trashed, a third of the farm will be unable, won't be able to produce anything for the time. It's, um, the pylons are going up and then obviously the land impacted afterwards. Um, knowing a fair few people in construction, people that planned construction, they all on a fag package, obviously.

00:23:50:10 - 00:24:31:00

They all say, I can't understand how pylons can be cheaper than any of the alternatives. Presently we have a German lady staying with us. She cannot believe that we'd use pylons instead of going underground, as they are doing in Germany. They they they're trying not to destroy the vista, essentially. Uh, we have had no transparency. Um, and essentially, I think we should listen to the people and not the shareholders of National Grid, who, as far as I'm concerned, are just thinking about the pennies in their shares.

00:24:31:02 - 00:25:04:01

Now, as I said, I live next door to the farm of the land, and he has been on the land for 85 years now. His father, his grandfather and back through another three generations have been on that farm. They have not moved in 600 years, as far as we know. They've been within the local area now. He 250 years ago, Constable was born and painted some great paintings of Suffolk.

00:25:04:13 - 00:25:24:01

Um, we're in Suffolk and Mystic. This fellow says essentially, um, the paintings are. Well, the painting he sees out from his farm is as good as any, um, Constable painted. Now.

00:25:26:03 - 00:25:43:26

You would not expect to go and see what a constable's paintings with thick black lines strewn across them. That would be sacrilege. It is sacrilege to our green and pleasant land. Thank you.

00:25:44:16 - 00:25:50:17

Thank you, Mr. Harper, and thank you for keeping to time. Um, now, if I could move to a Katherine cop show, please.

00:25:51:24 - 00:25:52:26

Thank you. Panel.

00:25:53:14 - 00:26:24:17

I live on Ardley, where residents are severely and directly impacted by this project. The underground line crosses our road to the right of our house. The pylon crosses it to the left, and they merge in the field behind our garden. National grid expects us to endure severe and direct harms, including loss of financial value of our houses, years of acute disruption around our homes, traffic and access issues to our homes and businesses. A more difficult commute to work for many. Severe biodiversity loss.

00:26:24:19 - 00:26:59:22

Noise pollution, permanent visual pollution, damage to our land, farmland and domestic infrastructure, damage to our property from works vibrations, as well as health and safety issues being explored relative to living so close to high voltage power lines. We are not NIMBYs. We are stakeholders who understand the need for this project, and we want to work with National Grid to help them achieve the best outcomes. There are 35 adequacy of consultation representations of the government documents list for this project, from public bodies representing hundreds of thousands of people across the region.

00:26:59:24 - 00:27:32:14

Because National Grid has failed to consult adequately with residents whose lives will be severely impacted and the bodies that represent them failed to respond to our correspondence, our questions and our representations on specific issues relating to our property failed to present and discuss. Options for the project at the outset. Failed to consult effectively with environment and heritage experts. Consultation does not mean providing information about a pre-determined outcome and avoiding direct conversation.

00:27:32:16 - 00:28:27:13

We want to know why has National Grid determined a plan which affects oddly, so profoundly across all the factors cited above, without presenting and discussing the options? Why has National Grid failed to consider the option of HGV HVDC underground cables, which require much less physical disruption to install? Why has National Grid ignored written evidence stating that the use of the Treasury Green Book is mandatory for large scale infrastructure projects? Why does National Grid

plan to eliminate roadside hedges and woodland, which they should be working with landowners to preserve? Will National Grid complete adequate biodiversity surveys for the root and substation sites? What biodiversity will they damage and how will this be compensated to ensure to ensure biodiversity net gain? Will National Grid reduce bird strikes by identifying the flight paths and migration routes for geese and swans, and installing aerial marker balls.

00:28:27:15 - 00:29:06:24

If not, they are negligent. Why was National Grid's consideration of a more direct, less costly, much less disruptive route along the edge of box box at airfield abandoned? The threat of national grids planned for oddly is making people ill with stress and residents there will have further stress when they have to make extensive claims for financial compensation. So before that happens, we implore National Grid to please work with us through targeted and intelligent consultation to consider options including taking the route offshore, eliminating pylons in Ardley and putting more of the cable underground and, at the very least, using the HVDC options so that trenches can be narrower.

00:29:06:26 - 00:29:07:19

Thank you.

00:29:07:21 - 00:29:12:04

Thank you very much indeed. Um, I'll turn now to Richard Bullock, please.

00:29:15:11 - 00:29:16:25

Good afternoon, I'm Richard Bullock.

00:29:16:27 - 00:29:18:12

I live on.

00:29:18:25 - 00:29:50:06

Uh, in a house on the boundary between the villages of Cotton and Mendham in Mid Suffolk. The proposed pylon line is due. 150m from the side of my house. There is also areas which National Grid have designated that they may wish to use, which adjoin and but up to the fence alongside my house. So I've heard various National Grid executives claim that alternatives to the pylons are simply too expensive.

00:29:50:08 - 00:30:21:08

So I'd like to take this opportunity to explain the costs to me. I've spent my lifetime as an engineer. My partner has spent a lifetime in the NHS as a nurse and a midwife. We aren't landed gentry. We scrape together the funds to buy our house. And I estimate that if the pylon project goes ahead, that will devalue my property by somewhere in the order of £200,000.

00:30:22:10 - 00:31:10:11

We also run a small B&B business from the property. I estimate that the costs and loss of business to that will cost me us another £50,000. So that's a very simple a quarter of £1 million, which completely wipes out our retirement provision. Um, I did a simple calculation that if you use the same proportion of costs to curtilage along the length of the pile en route, the loss in devaluation and business comes to

just under a quarter of £1 billion, which I don't believe National Grid have in any way, shape or form taken into account in their calculations.

00:31:11:06 - 00:31:44:13

That represents a real hardship to me. I think it accounts for a real loss to the East Anglian economy. And I think that their claim that cost is a primary driver. Um, their, uh, their arguments don't allow any costings for the horrendous destruction which they're going to cause by the, uh, the construction of the project itself. They don't allow any costs for the visual destruction, which we're going to have to put up with for the next 100 years.

00:31:44:26 - 00:32:15:06

Um, and on that basis, there's not much wonder that they can claim that the cost of their project is cheaper. Uh, I would simply ask yourselves, as the planners, not to look at the costs which National Grid have declared, but to look at the costs which they haven't declared, because those are the ones which allow the alternatives to simply show that the alternatives are less destructive and a much a better option for the whole of the country. Thank you.

00:32:15:08 - 00:32:20:00

Thank you very much, Mr. Bullock. And finally, Mr. Trevor Seddon, please.

00:32:20:19 - 00:32:23:19

Thank you. Panel. My my remarks.

00:32:23:21 - 00:32:53:27

Today will focus on the impacts of this project on the picturesque hamlet of often where I live. National grid zone documentation. That is the landscape and visual assessment. Chapter 13 identifies the landscape, character, type surrounding offers an area that will experience a significant negative impact of the proposed infrastructure. Only two locations have been identified at this level of severity. The other is Dedham Vale.

00:32:54:09 - 00:33:35:18

However, the mitigation approach between the two areas differs substantially. In Dedham Vale, undergrounding is proposed to reduce the acknowledged harm to landscape, heritage and community value, and often where the level of impact is described as comparable. The proposal remains overhead pylons. This creates a clear issue of consistency and fairness. If both locations are assessed as experienced significant harm, can the applicant explain with evidence why one community receives underground mitigation while the other does not? Often is not opposing the national requirement to remove energy from offshore generation into the grid.

00:33:35:20 - 00:34:17:14

What we question is whether continuing to deploy large scale overhead pylons represent represents the best available solution. National grid addressing a 21st century energy challenge using transmission technology developed in the last century. Steel lattice pylons are familiar, but they are not innovative or future proofed when viable alternatives exist. The parish council often has consistently requested that modern options, including offshore coordination and improved cabling

techniques HVDC undergrounding, are independent, independently evaluated alongside the antiquated technology preferred by national groups.

00:34:19:14 - 00:34:57:00

The baffling project plan for Crofton is to demolish the existing 132 kV line to the west of the village and reroute this underground to the east of the village, next door to our grade one listed church. The monster 50 metre high pylons will then run in the line vacated by the 132 kV line. It's difficult for the laymen to understand this, and evidently impossible for National Grid to provide an explanation of why we've seen other nationally significant cases, such as the Post Office Horizon IT scandal, have continuing with contested solutions despite credible concerns, concerns can cause lasting harm and loss of trust.

00:34:57:02 - 00:35:33:28

Often concern is that that avoidable impacts may be accepted without full evaluation of less damaging alternatives. If Dedham Vale warrants undergrounding because of the significance of its impact, then often identifies experience Experiencing comparable harm should also be afforded the same consideration. Indeed, we note that the panel has not visited the area. Something that should be corrected as soon as possible. We respectfully request that the impact of often is reassessed, the alternatives are transparently evaluated and that mitigation, consistent with other equally affected areas is applied.

00:35:34:00 - 00:35:34:23

Thank you.

00:35:34:25 - 00:35:49:12

Thank you very much. We have we have visited a significant amount of the project and we will review where we've been. But again, as I said previously, please put a submission for a company site visits and as we will review that location. Thank you.

00:35:50:28 - 00:35:52:03

Thank you very much.

00:35:55:28 - 00:36:10:17

It's now the term of James Navy Lux Moore, Neil Spooner and Luke Marshall who is representing the Dead and Vale Society. Mr. Naomi Lux Moore will be using the roving microphone, but if Mr. Marshall and Mr. Spooner could come forward, please, that would be very much appreciated.

00:36:14:20 - 00:36:51:12

Um. Mr.. Mr.. Naseby likes more. And Mr. Spooner. You will have three minutes, and, Mr. Marshall, you'll have three minutes on your representation on behalf of the Dead and Vale Society. And we've also been able to accommodate your your late request to have your, uh, speaking as a part of, as an individual as well. Although. Sorry. I beg your pardon, I was, uh. Yes, you're quite right. Um, so. So your five minutes as. Sorry, misreading my script. Um, your five minutes as representative of Dedham Vale Society and then three minutes as an individual afterwards? No, we're going to.

00:36:51:19 - 00:37:07:06

So. So the order for this, just to be clear, is Mr. Naseby. Lux Moore will be first. Uh, Mr. Marshall, on behalf of the Dead and Vale Society, will then ask Mr. Spooner to speak, and then we'll come back to you. Mr. Marshall, as your representation as an individual. Does that make sense?

00:37:11:18 - 00:37:37:17

No we don't. We can't take a copy. Thank you very much. But thank you for the clarification. So, um, I believe Mr. namby lucks more should have the roving microphone. I'm also aware that you will not be able to see the, uh, countdown clock. So I'm hoping that you'll be able to fit in with a little bit of leeway on the three minutes, but I will give you a, um, a warning like I have done to other people as well. So, um, Mr. Lane's next ball, please?

00:37:38:04 - 00:38:08:22

Obviously, I like everyone in Suffolk and against this application. National grid's mendacious obfuscation is not consultation. National Grid and German Fisher are untrustworthy and mendacious on approximately ten phone calls, all of them logged from July 7th to July the 14th, I asked for sighting details of the pylons crossing my land, refused to send me details of where pylons RG 192 and RG 193 were going to be sited.

00:38:08:24 - 00:38:45:00

refused on two grounds. Firstly, he said he couldn't because of GDPR rules. Laughable and ridiculous. Secondly, he said that I was not an interested party. Please note that the whole track crosses my drive and two of the pylons are 100 yards from my house. Note also, he said that he will compulsorily purchase a right to cross my drive, and yet he still insisted that I was not an interested party. During several more discussions, he continued to refuse to send me, citing details of the two pylons.

00:38:45:07 - 00:39:18:03

He then admitted that he was in fact just reading the National Grid protocol. That is undeniable proof that National Grid have never, ever had any desire to enter into any dialogue or consultation. I was fed predetermined lies and deceit. Point two National Grid have refused implicitly to consider any alternatives. They have, from day one, ignored Halford's whole law governing principles. The Green Book, their own needs, their report, the Electricity Act.

00:39:18:05 - 00:39:54:16

The Equator principles. County councils, residents and natural justice like the Post Office National Grid, consider themselves above the law. They've lied to most of the 40 speakers here, and took pretty much all residents of East Anglia. National grid are not going for the cheapest, quickest project. They have unlawfully started work in Norfolk already and can now lose faith. And that is why they have not costed or seriously appraised any alternatives. HVDC ultra high ultra HVDC underground offshore such as Sealink rerouting upgrading all of these that have been ignored with no cost transparency.

00:39:54:20 - 00:40:24:22

Any fool can see that this is all predetermined. Costings are inaccurate, timings are wrong and misleading. Had they run it offshore it would be almost completed by now. I have nesting brothers, visiting kites, nesting swallows, swifts in the meadow, nesting barn owls, tawny owls and even little owls, kingfishers, sparrowhawks, migrating geese, resident and migrating woodcock, wild English

partridge, plus endless other birds, all enjoyed by the public who walk the many footpaths under the proposed pylons. Most of these birds will disappear.

00:40:24:24 - 00:40:55:04

Many will die while energy boost their profits and keep on misleading the public to cover their own incompetent, incompetent, amateurish backsides. They will not physically be able to get their abandoned wide legs up my drive. A lot of police time will be wasted, and often I will not allow energy to block my only access route. The wonderful and under-resourced Suffolk Police will protect me. They will not allow my family's unlawful imprisonment by National Grid.

00:40:55:13 - 00:40:57:00

National grid should obey the law.

00:40:57:02 - 00:41:00:27

I'm going to ask you to conclude your your comments now. Please. Mr.. Nobody likes more.

00:41:00:29 - 00:41:18:17

Okay. And you five should enforce the rules and prevent this unnecessary face. Saving money. Wasting time. Delaying public scandal from happening. This was Boris Johnson's idea and should have been ditched along with him. Stop this fraud against the public purse. Pre determination is not allowed.

00:41:19:00 - 00:41:20:02

Thank you very much.

00:41:21:24 - 00:41:27:11

I'll now move on to Mr. Marshall on behalf of the General Society and to confirm you have five minutes.

00:41:27:24 - 00:41:30:27

So I'll be a bit tricky without.

00:41:30:29 - 00:42:02:18

You seeing these, but I'll just. I'll send them in afterwards. Um, so. Good afternoon. I'm a trustee of the Dedham Vale Society, which was formed in 1938 to protect the heritage of the Dedham Vale and its villages. The society was instrumental in getting the Vale its designated status in 1969. For reference, the society's position is still that the preferred alternative, Yvonne Shaw, would be HVDC underground, hugely reducing the vast way through the national landscape, which is up to half kilometre wide, not the 200m stated in National Grid's documents, with a working area as wide as one kilometre.

00:42:02:20 - 00:42:36:18

However, the real preference is the strategic integrated offshore grid, removing the impact completely. Charles Banner will be covering the alternatives and lack of valid consultation on Friday. So I'll leave that for now. As this session was specifically for new items, I'll be focusing on something new in National Grid submitted, submitted documents relating to the current route, technology and

mitigations. The area of concern relates to the significant amounts of infrastructure within close proximity to National, the national landscape along the southern boundary, with significant visual impact and within it and impact on its setting.

00:42:36:20 - 00:43:11:27

This will cause such harm to the national landscape in the long term that, if not mitigated now, will undoubtedly result in legal challenges at later stage causing delays. This has been raised at every consultation and reiterated in a formal letter to National Grid from our solicitors, Richard Buxton. There are significant discrepancies in the outcome of National Grid's analysis on the southern boundary compared to the north, which appear to have a significant analysis bias against the South. I ask that you give this a full and in-depth and unbiased review. National grid states that they have met the duty to protect and enhance relating to section 85 of the Crow Act by following the visual mitigating hierarchy.

00:43:12:00 - 00:43:42:18

However, there are far greater minimize options that could be implemented to the south to reduce the impact. Specifically, undergrounding from R-cnn along the southern boundary to a distance of at least two kilometres much in the north. However, National Grid have jumped straight to the offset option with an offer which does not, in our opinion, come close to offsetting the impact and then simply stated that they have met the requirement with no data or information to back this up. If you refer this page one. If you refer to page one of what I was going to hand out, this is a copy of National Grid's reverse zone of theoretical Visibility, Zee TV.

00:43:42:20 - 00:44:14:10

I've applied some overlays so that you could clearly see that the visual impact is much, much bigger to the south than it is to the north, and it stretches out much further. However, in contrast, the infrastructure is closer to the national landscape on the South than it is in the north. The second page focuses on the north that It compares the zone of theoretical visibility with what National Grid have derived as the visual setting. This visual setting includes all of what I've labeled zone three, visible from 10 to 15% of the national landscape and half of zone four, 10 to 15%.

00:44:14:28 - 00:44:30:12

They also expanded this out to include two sensitive areas, although they have low visual impact via an upper layer. Note here, the closest infrastructure is double the distance from the national landscape boundary compared to their derived visual setting at two kilometres on the zone four and five boundary.

00:44:32:20 - 00:45:05:19

Their documentation states one of the reasons it was moved further away after the previous consultation was to reduce the visual impact on the national landscape. You can also see that the relatively low Z TV from the CSC and pylons from within the national landscape page three shows the diagrams, but for the South, however, here there is a complete contrast. Their defined visual setting doesn't even cover the whole of Visual Zone three, or any of zone four doesn't include the small area. A similar area to Brett Valley, Ford and Valley. It's not only excluded from the visual setting, but has the pylon sited directly along it.

00:45:05:21 - 00:45:40:04

Holme Valley, just to the west, is also excluded from the visual setting and is impacted. Also. One CSC and approximately four kilometres of pylons reside in zone three, as close as 1.2km. The conversation CSC and another four kilometres of pylons reside in zone four, as close as 1.2km. Two of the CSCS have actually been located, and what National Grid's own derived visual setting and their own derived visual setting, almost one kilometre closer to the national landscape than the one to the north. On the pylon visibility maps, you can see that they have a much wider visual impact on the national landscape than those to the north.

00:45:40:13 - 00:46:14:09

The pylons circling RG will have a much higher visual impact, as ten of these are the bulkier angle pylons and the two and the curvature around, oddly, will result in them appearing closer together from the national landscape. Additionally, two are ten metres tall, which is not covered in the OTV as far as I'm aware, all of this resides within zone four, whereas nothing resides within zone four to the north. On page four, you'll see the consolidated impact of all of this, with many areas having 23 to 37 pylons visible and with three areas within the national landscape and its visual setting having 37 to 52 visible.

00:46:14:11 - 00:46:46:09

It saddens me to have to stand here today before you today, or sit on the Year of Constable's 250th anniversary. Having to defend the legacy of the views here immortalized that have remained largely unchanged for so many years. The obvious damage to the national landscape should be sufficient to ensure a full undergrounding of this section to conform to section 85. As such, the plans in their current form should be rejected or amended now to avoid delays by legal challenges, regardless of the wider options point. I was dead on time, but I have got to say just things about the site visit.

00:46:46:11 - 00:46:46:26

Is that right?

00:46:46:28 - 00:46:57:11

Just so they can be put in writing as a response to our request for site visits, then we can we can take that at the next deadline in line with the timetable.

00:46:57:16 - 00:47:09:24

I'll do that. The only thing was, I'd like to request a dedicated national landscape issue specific hearing covering National Grid's duty around section 85, lack of consolidated information and impacts and mitigations.

00:47:09:26 - 00:47:32:16

As we've mentioned a couple of times, we will be considering the hearings that we need, and there's space for both two sets of more sets hearings if we need to hold them. And also in terms of your handouts, please submit them at deadline one. Um, along with your your comments on today's hearing. So thank you for that, Mr. Marshall. Um, so I'll now pass to Mr. Spooner for your three minutes, please.

00:47:34:03 - 00:47:37:15

Mr. Martin, if I can ask you to turn your microphone off just for now, please. Thank you.

00:47:37:22 - 00:48:14:24

Good afternoon. Um, firstly, I'd like to thank the contributors, everybody today and yesterday and all the other meetings, um, for their support, um, in this terrible tragedy that's going on, considering the difficulties navigating the plethora of information on the internet, I suggest that there's a very large community that are unable to drill down to information that's available and directly affects them. So you're not seeing a full representation of the people that this is directly affecting. Due to the lack of consultation and lack of transparency by the proposers of this project, I need to ask these questions.

00:48:15:03 - 00:48:52:21

Who decided that the routing had to take the proposed route? Who? What consultation was carried out of this routing? It would seem very little. Why does the massive substation have to be in Ardley? It doesn't. Why does a battery bank have to be in Ardley? It doesn't. Although no one wants to see these power lines from the A12. Why does the routing not follow a major route such as the A12? The routing of all the infrastructure, the movement of the pylons, the aggregate to support the building of them, etc.

00:48:52:23 - 00:49:26:20

would be Minimized. Where is all the aggregate coming from? It's going to come from all over the country. As far as I can see, there are various areas where aggregate is available within Essex, but that's very limited. Where's all the steel pylons coming from? Who's manufacturing them? We don't have a steel industry anymore. If the Ardley substation has to go ahead, why can the power lines turn from the west of the A12, not share the underground ducting you're going across in underground ducting, and then you're going back with pylons.

00:49:26:22 - 00:49:43:14

Why can they not all go underneath the ground in underground ducting? Has this proposed development considered the future of power generation, which is likely to be smaller power stations spread throughout the country, which will make this project completely redundant by the time it's finished.

00:49:46:02 - 00:50:20:07

Why is the National grid not engaging with local stakeholders? Why are they hiding behind? I don't know. Not replying. Not engaging. The only ideal routing of this power line is undersea. That would tie in nicely with sizeable power station A and the proposed B Bradwell infrastructure. That's Bradwell power station which is now redundant. But the infrastructure the electricity infrastructure is already there, still there. Plus you've got the touch on German power line which has come across at Bawdsey.

00:50:20:09 - 00:50:52:00

It ties in beautifully with all of those. It's where it should be. Stop this project now. Please rethink and reconsider the consequences and the impact to our fragile environment. Lastly, is this a done deal? Are we all wasting our time? Or is the national grid serious about consultation? Are they? I don't know if they are serious about conversation. Then why are they not engaging with local communities and councils to address these immediate issues? Put it under.

00:50:52:02 - 00:50:55:25

See? It's the best solution. Please. Thank you.

00:50:55:27 - 00:51:02:16

Thank you for your comments, Mr. Spooner. Mr. Marshall, we'll come back to you for your individual submission. And you have three minutes.

00:51:06:16 - 00:51:08:06

Sorry, I've got some notes there. Over there.

00:51:08:12 - 00:51:09:25

Oh, yes. Please. Please do.

00:51:13:19 - 00:51:17:06

I wasn't expecting to do it, but thanks for letting me sort of add this in.

00:51:17:08 - 00:51:20:25

And just just to confirm, this is an opportunity to continue your comments about.

00:51:21:21 - 00:51:53:04

No no no no no thank you. No it's not. Uh, okay. So this is a sort of a personal, um, situation that I'd like to just sort of cover off a couple of bits around my experience, similar to other people and a couple of issues that I still believe need to be remediated. I live on the edge of the Dedham Vale, so is related. Um, and I'm right next to. I live in a grade two listed building, um, slightly set above the road. Um, about two feet. Um, about three meters back from the road with a retaining wall.

00:51:53:07 - 00:52:24:09

I am directly opposite the one of the largest compounds for industrial works through the undergrounding section, with about eight kilometres, sorry, eight acres of industrial sites. The whole road is directly opposite my house, and so I'll have about 180 lorry loads going in and out of the opposite of the house for a period of potentially two years. Um, there is absolutely no information about onsite movements. Um, bear in mind the house has got no foundations. Um, so obviously that can have significant impacts.

00:52:24:13 - 00:53:01:10

Um, I have highlighted, um, that the, that there's ample opportunity to move these sites further away from the listed building. It's the only building facing the, the, the location, um, only listed building. Um, and it's the 30 acre field. And they put it right in front of the house. They have moved it away 20m. It was ten metres from the house. It's now 30m from the house, but I'm sure they could manage to move that a little bit further because all the vibrations. I don't think my house is going to survive very well. Uh, there were some works 300m from our house, and the whole house was vibrating through the the rollers, the vibrating rollers.

00:53:01:15 - 00:53:33:04

And I had to make complaints to cope on numerous occasions. It was an absolute hell to live through for about three weeks. And this is going to be two years. Um, so there's a couple of problems. Um, the

first one being a haul road, is directly on top of a where the water runs off into where it congregates into a stream underground in my property that goes into lakes further down the, um, the valley that then goes on to the river. Um, the restore, um, the runoff water is going to flood my garden.

00:53:33:06 - 00:54:06:18

I've highlighted this to the multiple times. It floods where the whole road, um, is planned already without them putting the whole road in. Um, the location of the, uh, the location of where they're having the compound is over an ex quarry which was landfilled. They have partly moved it away from that, but it's still over part of it. So that's a concern. They haven't checked it yet at all. So that's that. The experience I've had has been an absolute nightmare. I was outside the DCO, the order limit, therefore I wasn't allowed a site visit.

00:54:06:20 - 00:54:38:14

But then I got a letter with compulsory purchase powers to if I didn't agree to certain things which weren't laid out very clearly. I still don't know what they want to do on my property. Um, at one point the line went straight their way through my front garden, the retaining wall, and it looked as if they wanted to widen the road, but apparently they just want to cut hedges. So sending me threatening letters about compulsory purchase when all they want to do is cut a hedge. But I've still not got anything in writing. I've got no idea what they want to do on my property. The heads of terms. Don't tell me I have literally no idea what they want to do.

00:54:38:16 - 00:54:40:24

I think they just want to cut the hedge back. Don't know.

00:54:40:26 - 00:54:46:12

Okay. Thank you. Thank you so much. Is that the conclusion to your comments? Because your time is up.

00:54:46:14 - 00:55:00:12

Oh, sorry. Um, yeah. Well, the conclusion, um, is on top of the national landscape visit. I'd like that to be looked at. And also as well, a neighbor who has got some significant damage or flattening half of his land.

00:55:00:14 - 00:55:23:11

I see, uh, as I mentioned a number of times, and I can obviously, uh, can I thank you all very much. Um, and you're welcome to take your seats back again. Thank you. Um, can I this is the, uh. Thank you very much for your contributions today. We've heard from everyone registered to speak in this session. Is there anybody here who has not spoken who would wish to be heard?

00:55:26:09 - 00:56:04:12

Thank you. As we noted earlier, if you could submit what you have said in writing at deadline one, which is Thursday, the 26th of February, um, and the applicant will provide a written response at the same deadline. Thank you to those of you in the room and online for attending and participating in this open floor hearing a digital recording of the proceedings today. Will be made available as soon as possible on the project page of the National Infrastructure website. I've seen your hand. I'll come back to you in just one moment. Um, should any party still wish to make a contribution to this open floor

hearing, but felt that they were unable to do so for whatever reason, they can make their contribution in writing by deadline one.

00:56:04:17 - 00:56:07:17

Um, I did see a hand up. Is there any particular? Yes.

00:56:22:02 - 00:56:25:12

I just ask you to put on the, um, the microphone. Sorry.

00:56:25:24 - 00:56:39:12

Um, the email address I have, um, which please confirm we need to send our comments to this address. The email address I have is Norwich to Tilbury at Planning Inspectorate gov UK.

00:56:39:21 - 00:56:52:19

I'm getting a nod from the case team who are behind you so I can see their nod. So that is the correct email address. And if you do have any questions about that, the case team who are to my left and to your right will be able to answer any questions as you leave the room.

00:56:52:21 - 00:56:59:22

Okay. Thank you. Thank you. To reiterate Norwich to Tilbury at Planning Inspectorate Gov UK.

00:56:59:24 - 00:57:32:09

Yes. There is also a specific portal where you can submit your comments that doesn't need an email address. But as I say, if you want to get the clarity from the case team before you leave, that would probably be the best thing for yourself. Thank you. Just finally, we do have two more open floor hearings to be held in Norfolk and Essex tomorrow, and they will be also available online to view for anybody. So the time now being 1119, uh, this hearing is now closed.

00:57:32:11 - 00:57:38:07

1219 I apologize. I'm going to correct myself. Uh 1219 um, this hearing is now closed.