



Hearing Transcript

Project:	Norwich to Tilbury
Hearing:	Open Floor Hearing 3 (OFH3)
Date:	12 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.

00:00:11:04 - 00:00:43:04

So good morning, everybody, and welcome. Uh, can I just everybody actually hear me? Just to make sure. Perfect. Thank you very much. Uh, can I confirm with the case team that the live streaming and the recording of this event is started? Please. I'm getting nods there, too. Thank you. Uh, it's now at 11:00, and this is the third open floor hearing in relation to the Norwich Norwich to Tilbury project. And it is now open. Um, thank you for attending this hearing. Whether you're here, whether you're here in person or online.

00:00:43:12 - 00:01:15:22

Uh, my name is Christopher Butler. I am planning inspector. I'm also a chartered member of the Royal Town Planning Institute. Uh, I was appointed as part of a panel of inspectors to examine this application. Um, that was done on the 29th of September, 2025 under section 65 of the Planning Act 2008 and a delegation from the Secretary of State. I'm now going to ask my fellow panel member present here today, who's also appointed by the Secretary of State to examine this application to introduce himself.

00:01:17:11 - 00:01:24:04

Good morning, everybody. My name is John Hockley. I'm also a planning inspector and a chartered member of the Royal Town Planning Institute.

00:01:25:13 - 00:01:59:18

This is one of two open floor hearings taking place concurrently. The other is currently taking place in Orsett in Essex, with the other panel members present at that open floor hearing. Those panel members have also been appointed by the Secretary of State to consider this nationally significant infrastructure application. And they are Susan Hunt and Kenneth Stone, who are planning inspectors and chartered members of the Royal Town Planning Institute, and Matthew Sims, who is a planning inspector and a chartered civil engineer and a member of the Institute of Civil Engineers.

00:02:00:22 - 00:02:19:26

I confirm I can confirm that all members of the examining authority have made a formal declaration of interests, and that there are no known conflicts of interest with regard to us examining this application. Together, we constitute the examining authority. But you might also hear us referred to as the X-ray as an abbreviation.

00:02:23:22 - 00:02:54:20

Um, there are other colleagues from the Planning Inspectorate who are joining us today, both here in Norwich and online. Uh, our case manager for the purpose of this open floor hearing is Jake Stevens, who's sitting to my right. Um, and he is accompanied by Emma Smith. Uh, we also have Georgie Hannigan online, uh, who is assisting online members or online participants, I should say. Uh, it is the case team that you should contact regarding any application process.

00:02:54:22 - 00:03:01:23

And in general today in regard to any arrangements, including any online connection issues, if you have any.

00:03:04:15 - 00:03:39:00

In addition to the case team, uh, there are technicians here from CVS internationally in the room. Uh, they are attending solely for the purpose of managing the recording, recording and the live streaming of the event. Uh, today's hearing is being undertaken as a blended event. This means that some are actually present here with physically in the room with us, and others are actually attending online using Microsoft Teams. Uh, however, your attending today will make sure that you're given a fair opportunity to participate. Uh, you'll also be aware you should also be aware that the meeting is being recorded.

00:03:41:17 - 00:04:15:11

Just deal with a few housekeeping matters. Um, for those attending in person today, there is no fire alarm drill or evacuation drill planned for today. So if you do hear a fire alarm, we will need to leave the fire. Exits are on our right hand side here and also back through the doors behind you and through the reception where you came in. Those are the quickest ways back out of the building. Uh, the congregation point is in the car park, away from the building or any point of hazard, and that includes the road, please.

00:04:15:13 - 00:05:01:08

So if we do have to go out, confine ourselves to the car park. Don't spill out into the road. Um, can everybody set any devices, including phones, to silent, please? Uh, online participants, uh, make sure your cameras are switched off and your microphones are muted. Unless you're actually speaking. Thank you. Uh, no requests have been made for any special measures or arrangements to enable participation in this hearing. If you do need assistance for any reason, please can you speak to the case team? Um, if at any point during the hearing you can't hear us or you wish to speak, Um, then can you just speak up if you're in the room? Uh, if you're online, uh, can you use the raise hand function in teams or just switch your camera on, please?

00:05:04:13 - 00:05:41:25

It's been explained to visual. Sorry. It's been explained to virtual participants what you do if connection is lost. That's already been done by the case team. Um, we can allow for a short break today. Um, if it's required. But we don't actually anticipate taking a break. Uh, we're we're expecting this event to take roughly about an hour and a half. Um, therefore, um, as I say, we're not intended to take a break. But if you do decide you need a break, for whatever reason, can you let the case team know and they will let us know? Um, and then we'll arrange to take a break at a suitable time.

00:05:45:14 - 00:06:17:10

We're unlikely to continue the hearing beyond 1 p.m.. Um, as I've already said, the event is being live streamed and recorded. Our letter of the 13th of January, which we refer to as the rule six letter, explained because we retain public and publish that information as a digital recording, it is subject to the General Data Protection Regulations. The Planning Inspectorate publishes and retains the recording for a period of five years, from the date of the Secretary of State's decision on the Development Consent Order.

00:06:17:27 - 00:06:36:04

That's regardless of whether the consent order is made or rejected. So if you're participating in this meeting, it's important that you understand that you are being recorded and that you are consenting to being, um, filmed and that publication or that digital recording being retained for that period of time.

00:06:41:17 - 00:07:24:12

We will only ever ask for information to be placed on the public record. That is important and relevant to the planning decision. To avoid needing to edit the digital recording, we'd ask you to try your best not to add any information into the public record that you would normally wish to be kept private and confidential. These are things such as your address, your financial circumstances, any medical conditions, something something like that. Something that you would ordinarily not wish other people to know. Um, if you do feel you need to refer to something that is private and confidential, can you discuss it with the case team in the first instance? They will then explore with you, uh, whether there's another format that you can put that information in writing to us.

00:07:24:19 - 00:07:29:12

Um, and it can be redacted, for example. So it's not in the public domain.

00:07:32:21 - 00:08:03:16

Does anybody have any questions in regard to those last points I made? I got nobody indicating in the room and nobody indicating online for those attending virtually. Can I just repeat the request made in the arrangements conference that you minimize background noise to ensure that you minimize background noise, can you make sure your phones are switched off and that your they turn to silent or turned silent, and that you stay muted and your camera switched off unless you're actually asked to speak? Um,

00:08:05:04 - 00:08:31:17

if you do want to speak, as I said already, you can switch your camera on and either use the raised hand function in Microsoft Teams or, um, you can ask an appropriate point in time in the proceedings. Can I also remind people that the chat function on Microsoft Teams is not working? So please don't try and ask questions or post any comments using the track. The the chat function is not being monitored

00:08:33:05 - 00:08:53:07

for those people watching the live stream, should we at any point adjourn the proceedings today? We will have to stop the live streaming to give clear recording files. As a result, at the point in time we restart the meeting and the live streaming, you will need to refresh your browser page. We will remind you of this again should we need to adjourn.

00:08:55:01 - 00:09:27:13

I just want to say a little bit about conduct during the hearing. We understand people have strong feelings about the proposed development, but it's important to recognize that we do have a process to follow. Um, we therefore ask for good manners and respect to be shown to each other throughout the hearing. Uh, as such, we would, um, as such, we want everybody to have an opportunity to speak. Uh, please don't talk over anyone when they're speaking. Uh, additionally, we ask for no clapping, no cheering, no booing.

00:09:28:01 - 00:09:54:07

Um, and, um, mainly for the, the main reason for we don't want to put people off who are nervous about speaking anyway. Uh, and we want to be able to hear what you're saying. Um, so, so if you can refrain from doing any of those things or anything similar, we will be very grateful. Um, please be polite to each other. Everybody deserves the same level of respect, even if you don't share their views.

00:09:56:26 - 00:10:10:12

You should avoid frivolous, libelous, and vexatious comments about any individual. Um, if you do fall into those, or we have concerns with regard to any of those areas, we may stop you from speaking.

00:10:12:08 - 00:10:30:10

Uh, we understand that some people feel nervous when having to speak in public. Uh, please be reassured that we understand and that if you stumble over words or you repeat them, it really isn't a problem. Um, and we'll take account of that in terms of the timings that are specified.

00:10:33:00 - 00:10:40:21

Does anybody have any questions about the technology or the general housekeeping or any other matters that I've just run through today in terms of today's hearing.

00:10:42:22 - 00:11:16:00

Got nobody in the room, nobody indicating online. As I've already mentioned, this is the third of three open floor hearings this week. Open floor hearing one took place in Suffolk on Tuesday afternoon and Thursday morning. Open floor hearing two is taking place concurrently from all in Essex today. Um, as I've already said, the other three members of the panel, uh, Mrs. Hunt, Mr. Sims and Mr. Stone are attending that event. They will watch the official recording of this open floor hearing afterwards. So you can be rest assured that every panel member will hear what you have had to say today.

00:11:16:02 - 00:11:22:02

And we will also be doing the same in terms of the all set hearings that are taking place concurrently.

00:11:24:10 - 00:11:46:25

The agenda is broadly the same for each hearing session, and have all been published on the Norwich to Tilbury project page of the National Infrastructure web pages. Uh, to today's agenda if you need to find it can be found under examination. Library reference EV 2004, it will not be displayed on the screen. We find it's sort of disruptive for people watching online.

00:11:48:19 - 00:12:20:01

Moving on to agenda item two, which is the purpose of the open floor hearing. Normally, open floor hearings are held at the request of interested parties. Normally you ask us to be heard, not the other way round. However, we've called this open floor hearing because we want to hear firsthand from interested parties. We want to know your thoughts at an early stage in the examination. It will help us to form a view about what we want to discuss in more detail at later issues, specific hearings, and in our written questions that we send to all parties.

00:12:22:06 - 00:12:35:18

We're familiar with the representations that have already been made. So when you speak, you don't need to repeat these at length. What we're seeking from you is for you to provide further detailed evidence, to help us understand the issues that are concerning you the most.

00:12:38:13 - 00:12:58:24

To make the best use of time. And whilst not wishing to limit contributions, um, it's it is important that we understand there's a lot of people to get through, so we have imposed a time limits. Um, but rest assured, whatever points you make, whether they be in writing or orally here today at the meeting, they will be understood.

00:13:01:28 - 00:13:36:29

We're aware that the applicant is attending today. However, the applicant is not participating in this hearing today. Uh, we're asking the applicant to respond to everything they hear through all of the open floor hearing sessions in writing. It's not the purpose of this hearing for the applicant to make their case just a little bit about the the process itself. Um, we're at the very start of the examination process that will run for up to six months. And indeed, the examination timetable is looking to utilize that whole six month period.

00:13:38:16 - 00:13:49:29

Once that period is finished. The examining authority will prepare a report of its recommendations to the Secretary of State for the Department of Energy Security and Net zero, who will make the final decision.

00:13:52:17 - 00:14:01:09

That's the end of this agenda item. I'm going to ask Mr. Hockley to take us forward into an agenda item three, which is just a brief introduction of who's speaking today.

00:14:02:04 - 00:14:31:27

Okay. Thank you. Um, it's our intention today to hear from interested parties who are pre-registered to speak and who are listed in the agenda for this hearing. After that, if time permits, we may choose to hear from any interested party who is not pre-registered but who wishes to speak. And finally, from any other person who wishes to speak. If time is not available during this open floor hearing session, then you are welcome to request a further open floor hearing later in the examination. And this should be input in writing by deadline one, which is Thursday the 26th of February.

00:14:34:15 - 00:15:14:24

As in all the hearings that we've held this week, due to a number of parties wishing to speak, you'll have seen we do have set a time limit per person, which is five minutes for those representing groups and three minutes for individuals. Uh, when you're speaking, um, you should take account of the time remaining shown on the monitor. There should be a clock visible to you. Um, for those attending virtually, I'll let you know verbally when you have one minute left. Um, please try to finish in your allotted time. Um, as we obviously we want here to ensure that we could hear from everybody here today. We won't be asking any questions once you have spoken, but please be assured that if we do have any questions for you, we'll send them to you in writing following this event.

00:15:15:26 - 00:15:46:15

So the order in which you'll be invited to speak will follow the published agenda. We'll ask people to come forward to the table in front five at a time, although some of the speakers may be attending virtually. We'll still ask you, each of you, to speak in turn according to the time allocated to you, as shown on the agenda. And when we've heard from all five of you, you're welcome to return to the general seating area. And then we'll call the next group forward. It would assist us if written summaries of anything that you say are submitted again by deadline one. So Thursday, 26th February.

00:15:46:22 - 00:16:08:14

These can include any additional points or further detail you may wish to make, but we're unable to do so because of the time constraints today. Please be reassured that when coming to our conclusions, we give equal weight to both oral and written submissions. There is no disadvantage to not having presented something orally here today. Does anyone have any questions on the speaking process?

00:16:11:04 - 00:16:49:22

No. Okay. Thank you very much. So we'll move on to the agenda item four. So I'm now going to invite those listed in the agenda to speak. Uh what I'll read out your names. If you're in the room please come to the table at the front. Um, if online, please turn your camera on. Um, there are the microphones here, and you press the button at the front to turn them on, and they'll light up red like this one. Um, and can I just reiterate, as Mr. Butler said, if you could, uh, please refrain from supplying any personal details when speaking here today. Um, your home address, age, medical editions and conditions and so on. Um, if you feel that you do need to supply that kind of information to us to support your case, then please talk to the case team about how that can be done without going on the public record.

00:16:50:22 - 00:17:04:18

I've been informed that Banwell Parish Council are no longer attending today. So the first group we have are a group of four. So these are, um, Adrian Ramsey MP, Norfolk County Council, Roydon Parish Council and tackle and Eston Parish Council. If you could come to the table. Thank you.

00:17:16:10 - 00:17:35:19

Thank you very much. When we've heard from from all of you, you can return to a general seating and we'll call the next group of five forward. Um, when you've returned to the general seating, please feel free to leave the venue if you wish, but obviously, please do so quietly if you do. Thank you. So first we have Mr. Adrian Ramsay MP. Um, you have five minutes. And please commence when you're ready. Thank you.

00:17:40:14 - 00:17:41:07

Okay I see.

00:17:41:15 - 00:18:14:01

Thank you, Mr. Hockley. The Norwich to Tilbury projects runs through my Waveney Valley constituency. So I'm here to represent the residents of Great Moulton, wind, farthing, Gillingham, Mendelson and everywhere in between. Building on my long track record of supporting renewable energy. Like most constituents, I strongly support the speedy rollout of renewable energy and increased grid capacity. However, if I were asked to move electricity produced off the north Norfolk coast down to London, I would not start by planning pylons south of Norwich.

00:18:14:24 - 00:18:51:29

Serious questions need to be asked about why an integrated offshore grid has not been put in place in East Anglia. The Offshore Transmission Network Feasibility study, published in 2011 stated that £5.6 billion could be saved by using a coordinated design approach. Why didn't this happen? And many of my constituents ask if connectivity to Norwich has been underground? Why not the rest of it? So for many of my constituents, there are big questions about the nature of this project, while others highlight specific impacts along the route, which I will ask you to fully consider.

00:18:52:20 - 00:19:27:16

You'll hear later from Mr. Graham Pearce, who's concerned that an area of ancient woodlands near Barnwell may be affected by the project, and who suggests some specific changes to the route. Ancient woodland is precious and should not be damaged by the pylons, and the ecological impact of the project needs to be re-evaluated more broadly. Residents of Shell Hanger have been in touch with me to emphasise that trees and hedges will be lost, taking with them habitat for a variety of animals, including species already under threat. Mitigation is needed for bat species whose flight lines are disrupted and habitats divided.

00:19:28:03 - 00:20:13:11

And the nearest pylon would be less than 200m away from shelf hanger meadows. SSI, a crucial grassland habitat. Safety issues should also be fully evaluated as part of this planning inquiry, including the impact on Norfolk Gliding Club at TBM giving. Given the serious dangers of collisions, I request that an accompanied site visit is undertaken to fully assess the safety issues at the gliding club. The proximity of pylons to individual homes in Gillingham is causing particular stress to individuals, and at Mendelsohn, the proximity of the new pylon line to the existing line creates a problem of scale for residents at Roydon, who will hear from the proposed route circles the village on three sides.

00:20:13:17 - 00:20:52:24

And constituents have put forward a proposed change to the route, which would allow a straighter line that would greatly lessen the impact. This area around the Waveney Valley is especially sensitive due to the Wortham Ling ssi and the cultural significance of the landscape and the impacts here remain a big concern for my constituents. The highways of Norfolk and Suffolk are not capable of taking the heavy vehicles and amounts of traffic that will be required to erect the pylons on the route proposed. Many constituents are worried about the construction phase of the project and its aftermath, so I'd ask how the potential damage and road safety concerns will be addressed.

00:20:53:16 - 00:21:30:00

Furthermore, individual families are worried that their homes will be devalued. Even a temporary drop in value could be disastrous for people at a particular point in their life when they need to move elsewhere, so provision needs to be made to ensure that people are not left in impossible positions. The impact on farmers along the route must be properly assessed too. For example, you've heard this week from Cotton Parish Council about the impact on farm viability and how that will be addressed. In conclusion, my constituents feel that alternative options haven't been properly considered, including an offshore integrated grid.

00:21:30:02 - 00:22:04:09

As in other parts of the UK and in Europe, there are documented concerns that pylons are vulnerable to storms and man made threats, whereas undergrounding cables would provide reassurance against these and other concerns. Many residents of Waveney Valley have contacted me to say that they have not felt heard in the consultation to date, so I very much hope that this planning inquiry will fully consider the evidence and assess the impacts and options for how best to deliver the improved energy connectivity and decarbonisation that we need, whilst minimising impacts on communities and the natural environment.

00:22:04:16 - 00:22:05:11

Thank you.

00:22:06:14 - 00:22:07:17

Thank you, Mr. Ramsay.

00:22:09:20 - 00:22:14:27

Okay. Thank you. Our next speaker is Graham Plant for Norfolk County Council please.

00:22:16:03 - 00:22:46:03

Good morning. I am Graham to plan some counseling. Cabinet member for Norfolk County Council. My portfolio is highways, infrastructure and transport, so I have responsibility for the county council's response to nationally significant infrastructure projects like this one. As a county council, we have a number of responsibilities that are affected by this project one way or another. We are, amongst other things, a local highway authority, a lead local flood authority, a fire and rescue authority, a public health authority and a planning authority.

00:22:46:08 - 00:23:18:01

So we come to this examination with an interest in a number of statutory duties. It is very important that whatever we think about this project overall, I'll come on to that. We do have everything we can to minimize any impact on our ability to carry out these functions and protect the environment and communities that we are entrusted with. I have asked Norfolk County Council officers and our legal representative to attend, issue specific hearings and make written submissions to set out our case on all the technical and environmental issues at this project brings up.

00:23:18:09 - 00:23:53:10

I'm sure, in particular, that you're looking forward to reading our local Impact report, which we will submit to deadline one. Of course, as well as all these technical and statutory roles, we're also a democratic organization which has a duty to represent the interests of our communities more generally. As an elected representative of the county councils administration, I have a part to play in laying out our views in a way that goes beyond environmental impact assessments or the finer points of DCO drafting. So our position throughout the consultation process for this project, Norfolk County Council, has been very consistent.

00:23:54:01 - 00:24:30:28

Now, the first non-statutory consultation in 2022, we asked National Grid to reconsider the strategic approach by investigating an offshore or underground option. We, alongside Essex County Council

and Suffolk County Council, commissioned a review of the strategic options which showed that there was time for a rethink. National grid have pushed through with an overhead proposal, and a time to rethink those strategic options has come and gone. And I must say that also in Norfolk, we have 18 nips on the go at the moment with solar farms, and the cumulative effect of that on Norfolk is immense.

00:24:31:21 - 00:25:07:23

Each insect is being sought on its own merits and demerits and together as a as a cumulative effect on Norfolk. It is, I hope, by the Inspectorate being looked at as one rather as each individual project. In an ideal world, we would want to avoid landscape impacts for the whole of Norfolk, but we are particularly focused on the Waveney Valley. This is primarily because it is the most sensitive landscape and the project route through Norfolk. With Suffolk County Council, we jointly commissioned a valued landscape assessment which shows the sensitivity of the landscape.

00:25:07:25 - 00:25:40:02

But we also focused on this area because of a new run of pylons through the Waveney Valley. We complete the encirclement of death by electricity transmission infrastructure, and existing 400 K runs from north to south, wrapping around the east of this. There is a 130 2KV line running south from a UK Power Networks in Diss, the Norwich to Tilbury, which is 400km. CVS will run north from north to south like the existing transmission line, but rather than parallel running to the existing route.

00:25:40:04 - 00:26:10:27

It wraps around this to the west. From the point of view of this, the relationship between the town and the open countryside will be completely framed on all sides by pylons. The cumulative impact is enormous. We thought National Grid understood the impact it is having on this. When the statutory consultation in 2024 included an underground Waveney Valley alternative, which would have put the cables underground for a two kilometres km stretch of the route. This proposal isn't something that National Grid would have done lightly.

00:26:11:04 - 00:26:45:17

We all know that underground cables are more expensive than pylons. We all know that overhead lines are, to quote the National policy Statement, the strong starting presumption for electricity networks in general. So the fact that this option was ever on the table means that National Grid know the damage their pylons are doing to the Waveney Valley and to this. We were therefore so disappointed to find out that the targeted consultation last year that the Waveney Valley Alternative is no longer part of the proposal. In the application materials, the applicant admits that there will be significant adverse impacts to the landscape all through Norfolk but most of all the Waveney Valley.

00:26:45:21 - 00:27:15:00

So in conclusion, there are, we are told, practical and environmental barriers that prevent the applicant from undergrounding. We can argue about that, but no, undergrounding leaves us with huge impacts on our residents and our landscapes. Norfolk officers will do what they can to negotiate and argue to improve their proposals as they stand. We don't think this project is the best strategy for our transmission grid, but now we are here with the application in front of us. The applicant cannot be let off the hook for mitigation for the damages they will cause. Thank you.

00:27:17:17 - 00:27:31:24

Thank you, Mr. Palmer. Okay. Thank you for that. Our next speaker, please, is Mr. Carson, I believe, for Roydon Parish Council, Paul Carson. I do apologize. Okay. I shall make it out. I apologize. Okay. Commence whatever you.

00:27:32:15 - 00:27:33:10

Roydon Parish.

00:27:33:12 - 00:27:34:07

Councils verbal.

00:27:34:09 - 00:27:35:09

Submission today.

00:27:35:11 - 00:27:35:26

Focuses.

00:27:35:28 - 00:27:36:13

On National.

00:27:36:15 - 00:27:40:23

Grid's ignoring of the Holford rules around our village. This disregard.

00:27:40:25 - 00:27:41:10

Means.

00:27:41:12 - 00:27:41:27

That uniquely.

00:27:41:29 - 00:27:42:14

Along.

00:27:42:16 - 00:28:13:01

The Norwich Tilbury route, Roydon will be surrounded on three sides by 50 metre high pylons to the north, alongside Snow Street and Bruce Green, to the west along Dairy Lane and Hall Lane, and to the south through the Waveney Valley. No other village from Norwich to Tilbury is impacted in such a dramatic way. No other village will be so significantly hemmed in by pylons and their cables. Holford Rule one states that pardon should avoid, if possible, major areas of highest amenity value.

00:28:13:26 - 00:28:48:13

Supplementary notes say that routes should minimise the effect on other special landscapes, including those of county, district or local value. Ignoring this, National Grid has routed pylons through the Waveney. Valid. Considered a valued landscape by Suffolk and Norfolk County councils, both county wildlife trusts and local residents. What makes the valley so special is its contrasting habitats of peatland fen, deciduous woodland and heath. Specifically Wortham, Ling and Roydon Fen Local Nature Reserve.

00:28:49:21 - 00:29:24:24

To compound the impact, the powerlines will run through the narrow gap between these two sites, seriously detracting from their setting. Holford rule two states that pylons should avoid smaller areas of high amenity value. The proposed pylon route has significant impacts on the setting of listed buildings in Royton. One pylon, for example, will be just 200m or so from the grade two listed 17th century Lime Tree Farm on Snow Street. Other pylons wake upwards of 200m from other listed buildings in this area, and further south.

00:29:24:26 - 00:30:01:20

The grade one listed some religious church will be overshadowed by four pylons. Some of the route runs close to the Long distance Angles Way footpath and the archaeological moated site of Bush Hall, a non designated heritage asset within the District Neighbourhood Plan. Heron Meadow on Doit Lane, a valued CIC care farm and local community asset, will have a pylon in clear sight about 100m to its north. Holford rule three states that, all other things being equal, choose the most direct line with no sharp changes of direction.

00:30:01:26 - 00:30:37:07

There is no greater example of the entire Norwich Tilbury route, where our village is so impacted by disregard for this rule. The towers and cables be the single most dominant feature of the landscape on three sides of the village, with two sharp changes of direction, routes with significantly less impact on people in the environment, would either swing more gently through sparsely populated areas to the west of Brittingham and west of Worthing, or more directly to the east of diss, following the approximate route of the A1 A40 road.

00:30:37:21 - 00:31:10:06

Subsequent notes on rule three state that, where possible, the grid should choose inconspicuous locations for angled towers and other infrastructure. There are very few inconspicuous places around our village, which lies in a largely flat and lightly wooded horticultural landscape. The same point applies to Holford rule, for which states that the route should choose train hill backgrounds in preference to heights in preference to sky backgrounds. Roydon is known for big skies.

00:31:10:08 - 00:31:45:15

Several are protected under policy 16 of the Decent District Neighbourhood Plan, made in October 2023. These views were chosen by the public before they ever knew of the Norwich Tilbury project. These key views north of the village, from Dora Lane, are south across the Waveney Valley, will be devastated by the presence of pylons. In conclusion, the Holford rules exist to minimise the impact of pylons on people in the landscape, but it's hard to think of anything more intrusive and prominent around our village than 50 metre high pylons and cables.

00:31:45:17 - 00:32:25:03

We ask what is the point of the Holford rules if National Grid are going to so egregiously ignore them around our parish? National grid repeatedly talks about the prohibitive costs of changing its preferred route, but throughout the project, compromises that involve additional costs have been made to reduce significant impacts on communities, landscapes, and residents health and wellbeing. Why should Roydon be any different and what changes to the route here really cost? Would they make such a

dramatic difference? To help make our case, we would ask that the planning inspector comes to our village and walks the route with us.

00:32:25:05 - 00:32:31:29

So you can see firsthand how this proposed route will damage our community. Thank you for your time.

00:32:32:03 - 00:32:45:03

Thank you, Mr. Carson. Thank you very much. Our next speaker, uh, is Miss Darrell. Um, uh, tackle Neston. Um, I do hope I've pronounced the village correctly. And just as a general point.

00:32:45:07 - 00:32:47:15

Don't worry. Tackle stunt. It doesn't make any difference.

00:32:47:24 - 00:32:48:09

Thank you.

00:32:48:11 - 00:32:48:26

Good morning.

00:32:48:28 - 00:32:58:18

Thank you. And there's a general point. Yes. Please. Anyone, please feel free to put me right on any matters of pronunciation. So thank you. Do you have five minutes? Thank you. So that What? Are you ready?

00:32:58:24 - 00:33:31:09

I represent the parishioners of Kelston who, whilst we understand the imperative to get offshore energy to London, we feel that we've not been properly consulted from the beginning. If we had, there are innovations. We would have suggested a long cycle route from Tilbury to Norwich, with the buried cables underneath, would provide a massive bonus to communities along the line in terms of tourism and the economy.

00:33:32:24 - 00:34:10:13

Our beautiful, well wooded historic village of Kelston is listed in the Domesday Book. It has a conservation area which is quite rare in South Norfolk. It's 33 listed buildings, including the grade 1/13 century All Saints Church and three manors. There's the Great field with evidence of Saxon strip farming and archaeological finds running the gamut through the Bronze Age, Iron Age Roman settlements with a fine mount from a sword scabbard from about 8500 made of gold and cloisonné garnets found on the Great Field.

00:34:10:15 - 00:34:47:25

The Great Field is the site of National Grid's proposed pylon numbers 33, 34 and 35 between these sites. The pylons accompanying construction hall, roads, etc. the archaeology is vulnerable to destruction. Real harm to our environment is inevitable if this project is allowed to go ahead. For example, we recently made a tree protection order on the Stickler Oak, which is an ancient tree with a girth of over five metres, situated next to pylon number 33 on the Hall Road area.

00:34:47:27 - 00:35:09:23

I know that the TPO will be superseded if the project is allowed to go ahead. There are many examples of wildlife. Wild deer herds, uh, great crested newt, rare crayfish, and, uh. We also have maternity colonies of bat species.

00:35:11:16 - 00:35:41:25

Our objection is based on the overwhelming and irreparable harm that the development will inflict on the natural environment. The visual amenity of the landscape and the well-being of our community. The proposed route cuts directly through the heart of the unspoiled and tranquil rural landscape. Tackle Stone is situated within a predominantly agricultural and ecologically sensitive area. The introduction of 50 metre high steel, that is, pylons will irrevocably industrialise this beautiful landscape.

00:35:42:11 - 00:36:15:18

The sheer scale of the pylons will constitute an unacceptable, dominating and permanent scar on the horizon, destroying the character of the countryside, which is valued by both residents and visitors. The parish council maintains that this visual intrusion is disproportionate to the perceived national benefit, and represents a failure to respect the local environment. The construction and presence of this vast infrastructure will result in significant and unavoidable ecological damage.

00:36:15:23 - 00:36:48:23

The construction phase alone will involve heavy vehicle movements, habitat fragmentation and disruption to local watercourses and soil health. Furthermore, the permanent pile on highways and the maintenance requirements will require the clearance of natural vegetation, disrupting established ecosystems and local wildlife corridors. Our council strongly objects to the assumption that an overhead line is the only viable solution, given the project's magnitude and the proximity of the two existing infrastructure.

00:36:48:25 - 00:37:39:00

The preference for overhead lines over underground or subsea cabling represents a short term, cost driven decision that disregards future proofing, long term environmental value, and community impact. We assert that the national significance of the landscape demands that most modern and least intrusive solution, that is undergrounding, be mandated, as is common practice in other sensitive areas internationally. The proposed route will result in direct impact on residents, including property devaluation, severance of land, the agricultural land being severed, making farming opportunities less efficient and potentially unviable for local businesses, and disruption of amenities.

00:37:39:02 - 00:38:08:05

We urge the Planning Inspectorate Under Secretary of State to reject the current proposal for overhead line development. The long term detrimental and irreversible impact on the landscape and community far outweigh the arguments for the chosen route and method. We demand that National Grid re-evaluate the entire scheme and adopts a policy of full undergrounding. We look forward to receiving confirmation that our objection has been considered. Thank you.

00:38:08:27 - 00:38:21:18

Thank you very much. Okay. Thank you very much to to all four of you and for keeping to time as well. It's much appreciated. Um, so as I mentioned before, you're welcome to a leader venue if you wish. But if you do, please do so quietly. Thank you.

00:38:24:21 - 00:38:56:04

Just once we're turning around, just to remind people, there was a request in one of those representations for an accompanied site visit. Um, deadline. One is the ability to make a written request for a company site visit. Doesn't guarantee a site visit. Um, but it means it will at least be considered. Um, we would also urge people when they're asking for us to do a company site visits to bear in mind, we have published where we've already been, um, we've done quite extensive visits already from public vantage points.

00:38:56:16 - 00:39:05:16

Um, and please have a look at those, because normally we would exclude anything we've already been to. Um, so have a look at those as well, please.

00:39:07:24 - 00:39:18:28

Okay. Thank you. Um, so our next speakers, we have our, um, Anna McGee. Nicholas cheeseman. Uh, Matthew Day, who is online, Karen Fisher and Mike Duby.

00:39:32:12 - 00:39:39:27

Okay. Thank you. Um, so, yes, our first speaker is Anna McGee. Please welcome. And you have three minutes. Thank you.

00:39:39:29 - 00:39:40:20

Thank you.

00:39:40:22 - 00:40:16:03

And, uh. Yeah. Thank you for this opportunity to speak. My name is Doctor Anna magee. I am a psychotherapist, a farmer's daughter, and I'm the owner and director of Heron Medicare Farm and CIC. Heron meadow is a retreat center, a sanctuary for healing and learning in nature. As a CIC, we operate for the benefit of the local community, human and non-human. We hold regular sessions with local children and have partnerships with organizations such as Apricot Center, who offer specialist nature based therapies for children with neurodiversity and trauma, with Men's Craft, a local charity supporting vulnerable men who may be at risk of social isolation or suicide.

00:40:16:05 - 00:40:46:08

So why are these pylons a problem? Well, nobody in their right mind would buy land for a retreat center less than 100m from high voltage power lines. Unfortunately, a year prior to the announcement of entity, I had sold my house and bought this land. My savings, my life savings have been invested in Heron Meadow. The Norwich to Tilbury proposal is an existential threat for my business, which which I will be forced to close. I will be obliged to pursue the applicant for loss of my investment and livelihood, because the science is actually in, although it's being ignored.

00:40:46:10 - 00:41:17:27

There are a wealth of peer reviewed papers on power watchdog demonstrating the harmful effects of EMF at 50Hz. To briefly summarize ten of these links, to which I will submit as an appendix.

Exposure to low frequency EMF has been shown to increase progression of melanoma cancer cells to raise incidence of leukemia to damage fertility, are implicated in the rise of autism and children negatively influence heart rate variability and cardiovascular performance, cause sleep disturbance, depression, anxiety, headaches, and irritability.

00:41:18:00 - 00:41:53:15

A 2016 Italian study to determine the safe distance from HV lines for schools suggested 200m as a minimum for 300 kilovolt power lines. The Norwich to Tilbury line will carry 400 kilovolts. Animals inclusive of large vertebrates such as cows, also birds, insects and other invertebrate life orientate and navigate using their sensitivity to geomagnetic fields. Proximity of the high voltage power lines interferes with their behaviors and their ability to navigate. I wish to advocate for protecting the land, the natural world, and the non-human beings of the land.

00:41:53:17 - 00:42:29:16

They have no other voice, but they are every bit as important to this discussion. And here's the thing. High voltage pylons are fundamentally the wrong answer to the current question, and the need we as a species can and must do better than this. Installing more pylons is a doubling down on a bad idea, a damaging blot on the landscape, and on the history of human endeavor. They represent very old technology. Installing them is vastly expensive in terms of carbon emissions, the very thing that they are meant to mitigate. I've repeatedly asked for a disclosure of the carbon footprint for Norwich to Tilbury, inclusive of the production and shipping of steel and millions of tons of cement.

00:42:29:18 - 00:42:53:28

Furthermore, these costly monsters will be obsolete within 80 years, so their decommissioning is already in sight. It is our grandchildren who will have this job. It will be their task to clear up the mess that we are proposing to cause to our beautiful island and for all its inhabitants. National grid may only be legally obliged to their shareholders, but all of us are morally obliged to. Safeguarding the future. The future and the beauty of our countryside. Thank you.

00:42:54:22 - 00:42:56:10

Thank you very much, miss McGee.

00:42:58:07 - 00:43:04:00

Okay. Our next speaker, please, is Nicholas Cheeseman. Welcome. And. Yeah. Three minutes. Thank you.

00:43:04:02 - 00:43:04:17

Good morning.

00:43:04:19 - 00:43:05:04

Sir.

00:43:05:19 - 00:43:28:12

Um, I'm sure that the examining authority, aware of how emotive this project is, and we've heard that from some of the previous speakers. But I'd like to concentrate for a moment on our own personal position. I farmed our land with my brother in law. So I object to the proposal to install six by 50 meter pi pylons through the middle of our farm

00:43:30:07 - 00:43:32:25
hall is a grade to start listed building.

00:43:34:27 - 00:44:15:02
It's a building of national importance. And the site includes two grade two barns, one of which is a recognized Norfolk longhouse. The other, wrongly named by the applicant as a piggery, is in actual fact a three storey tower house with a cob bomb attached to it, which has a date stamp inside it of 1134. These form a rare and coherent historic farmstead. The proposal to put pylons by reason of their scale, height and industrial appearance would introduce dominant vertical structures into a historic landscape.

00:44:15:29 - 00:44:50:10
They would intrude into a key view of listed buildings and permanently alter a historic skyline. They would clearly result in harm to the setting of a derelict designated heritage asset, which the National Policy Framework must be given. Saints must be given great weight. The renowned artist George Mackie used to do his wood carvings at the farm and produced many of the detailed farming activities going on around there, including those barns that I've already mentioned.

00:44:51:02 - 00:45:23:11
We asked the applicant if the route could be changed by moving the pylons 50m northwest. They would still be on our land. We weren't trying to get rid of them whilst we don't agree with them. We were being as fair as we possibly could, but by moving them that fifth 500m, they would be far less intrusive. When they did eventually reply, they said it couldn't be done for all sorts of spurious reasons, not least of which because it was going to be moved close to a grade two star listed property.

00:45:24:02 - 00:45:31:24
That property is far further away than the 200m that the pylons are going to be next to our own.

00:45:34:00 - 00:45:57:21
One of the contractors subcontractors that was working for them, informed me that actually the main reason the line wasn't going to be moving because it was an inconvenience to them. What they've got, where they are, makes it very easy to put down the lay down roots and the working days and the the amount of land that they need to be able to construct the panels in the first place.

00:46:01:04 - 00:46:05:03
We'll have to ask you to draw it to a close now, please, Mr. Cheeseman. Thank you.

00:46:10:09 - 00:46:21:24
Thank you for your submission. Um, obviously, within your submission there, there was some personal details that you raised it as. Ah, if you'd like those, um, redacted from the public record, then you're welcome to speak to our case team.

00:46:21:26 - 00:46:25:03

But I'm quite happy for them to remain on record.

00:46:25:05 - 00:46:26:27

Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Cheeseman.

00:46:28:29 - 00:46:46:20

Okay. Our next speaker is, uh, Matthew Day and his appearing virtually with us. Mr. day, if you could turn on your camera, please. Uh. Hurry up, I can see you. Welcome, Mr. Day. Um, yeah. Three minutes. Thank you, thank you.

00:46:46:22 - 00:47:18:21

Um, hi, I'm Matt. I'll start with some of my reflections on the experiences I had with the public consultation. It feels like it was procedurally skewed from the outset and relied on distorted evidence from the start. The strategic choice of pylons being the best option was allegedly made on cost grounds. Yeah, there was no validation of the cost of the other options, and it conflicts with estimates from other credible third parties. From my experience, the consultation process has been pretty opaque.

00:47:19:03 - 00:47:54:04

Um, the maps effectively obscure the extent of the construction process, such as the temporary access roads that are deactivated by default on the interactive map, and the line markings that aren't very intuitive for the general public, who aren't really familiar with technical plans and how they look. Um, the digital visualizations aren't much better either. They're not very reflective of the true impact, and in reality, on top of the long term landscape impact, the project requires approximately 2,000,000m² of stone type one M0 to be laid across our countryside.

00:47:54:06 - 00:48:24:20

That's the equivalent of about 400 football pitches. Just to give it some context. And that's going across farmland, footpaths, hedgerows, just for build access. More critically, I received information from a National Grid representative at one of their public sessions confirming that significant property acquisition costs were being attributed to a separate property portfolio budget, rather than into the project's own cost line. I understand that the vendors have also been required to sign NDAs to conceal these transactions.

00:48:24:29 - 00:49:15:27

This suggests that the true project budget is being artificially suppressed by book accounting. If some costs are being hidden in a separate PNL to make the pylons appear cheaper than the alternative option than the inspector, and can't really make any valid value for money assessments, I have a lot more to say. Um, on this, um, I think I'm going to struggle with my allotted time. Um, I may submit this in writing. Um, as a as an additional thing, but just to finalize, I think, you know, whatever side of the fence you're on, you know, however vested interest you have in people like Blackrock and their profitability, we are just insignificant creatures here, living on a tiny island on a massive planet that's existed for billions of years before we started mucking about with it.

00:49:16:00 - 00:49:36:14

We are just custodians for a very short amount of time, and to approve this project is to sanction the permanent industrialisation of East Anglia for the sake of a short term stakeholder dividend. It's, um, you know, quite frankly, disgraceful and should be thrown out. From my perspective. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak.

00:49:36:20 - 00:50:05:25

Thank you, Mr. Day. Um, just to reiterate, obviously, that, um, I mentioned before that, uh, you are all welcome to obviously putting, um, further written submissions, if you wish, or expand on the points that you've made here today or you are going to make here today. Um, if you, you know, the time is not sufficient for you. We completely understand that. And you're welcome to do it by deadline one. Thank you. Okay. Our next speaker, please, is our current fisher. Good morning. Um, welcome. And you have three minutes. Thank you.

00:50:05:28 - 00:50:07:21

A small village in south Norfolk mentioned.

00:50:07:23 - 00:50:08:12

In the Domesday.

00:50:08:14 - 00:50:11:25

Book with a thousand year old church. There's a chapel where John Wesley.

00:50:11:27 - 00:50:12:12

Preached.

00:50:12:14 - 00:51:11:22

And it's been written about by Wordsworth and Larkin and the Faunce. It hoard of Roman coins now housed in the British Museum, were discovered there. There was a 13 acre triple size site, forms a meadow, and the village sits in the Thames Valley, through which runs one of only 200. Vitally important chalk rivers in the world. These would be a huge risk of irreparable damage from runoff from construction work. Should this proposal go ahead. It's also home to a wonderful community whose lives have been thrown into disarray for the last four years, with many finding their mental health severely affected by the worry of these proposals, which would leave forms that sandwiched between the existing and the proposed pylon lines, creating a dense industrial wire scape in clear breach of the Holford rules, 45 existing pylons can be seen from the fields behind my house, and National Grid states that there could be visibility of up to 70 pylons from the more elevated parts of the village, and that for the vast majority of the route there will be a significant impact on landscape character.

00:51:11:24 - 00:51:42:19

Our village would be encircled by metal towers looming over us on either side of the valley. The computer generated visualisations of the proposed route through foresight provided at the consultations, did not include the existing pylon line to show the true cumulative effect, and it's just one example of the many deficiencies in the consultation process, some of which have been

referenced by other speakers. We're told that costings for this project are about £5 million per kilometre, yet costings for Bramford to Twin stage appear to be about £24 million per kilometre.

00:51:42:21 - 00:52:14:03

How can Norwich to Tilbury be five times cheaper? What have National Grid not included in its costings of this project? Why has a route through unspoiled countryside been chosen when it could have run alongside major roads with easy access, which would have caused only short term disruption, whereas the inaccessible routes through our villages will cause permanent destruction of areas of natural beauty and critically important ecosystems and adversely affect communities, homes, livelihoods and the mental health and wellbeing of so many people.

00:52:14:06 - 00:52:45:02

Why have cheaper, better and faster alternatives not been properly considered? Is it that pylons give easy opportunities for the industrialisation of East Anglia. With the proliferation of solar and best site applications, including a solar proposal that would engulf our village. These will generate huge profits for corporations at the expense of local communities, and the real human cost must not be underestimated. This is the wrong proposal in the wrong place, and I would ask that further hearings be held to consider the alternatives in greater detail.

00:52:45:10 - 00:53:03:21

A responsible and evidence based decision must reject the current overhead pylon route, and require that National Grid pursue an environmentally and socially sustainable alternative to protect heritage, ecology, nature and wellbeing of all communities along the route. Thank you.

00:53:05:03 - 00:53:05:27

Thank you.

00:53:07:20 - 00:53:18:09

Okay. Our next speaker, please, is Mike Duby. I hope I pronounce your name correctly. Oh that's good. Thank you very much. Yeah. Welcome. You have three minutes. Thank you. Hi.

00:53:18:11 - 00:53:19:00

My name is Mike.

00:53:19:02 - 00:53:19:17

Duby.

00:53:19:19 - 00:53:20:11

And I'm a resident.

00:53:20:13 - 00:53:21:01

Of Roydon.

00:53:21:03 - 00:53:51:09

And I'm not going to talk about the whole route. I'm going to talk about the parts of the route that start up north, just north of Roydon, for about one and a half miles south. I'm not going to comment about

whether it should be under sea or underground, because people with far more knowledge than me have already commented, and that will continue to do so. Nor will I comment upon the flora and fauna damage or the desecration of our beautiful landscape around the Waveney Valley. What I will comment upon, though, is the effect on human beings.

00:53:51:13 - 00:54:31:17

Now these pylons create things called corona ions, which can react to particles in the air, which make for better or better words. Sticky. These sticky particles can be inhaled by human beings or land on their skin, and these particles can be carcinogenic. And this is a theory that's been put forward by Professor Henshaw of Bristol University for over 25 years, but he's also been followed up by other universities in Canada, California and in Europe. Now, National Grid will say that there is no evidence to support this theory, but equally as well, the scientific community is divided on this, and I fully admit that.

00:54:31:19 - 00:55:05:18

But there are equally as many in favor of this theory explaining what is happening. For example, the theory of relativity explains the space time continuum. The theory of evolution explains why we're here today. So they're not proofs, they are theories. Um, this theory is so prevalent that other countries have taken it upon themselves to do something about it. So, for example, the Netherlands have banned any introduction of new pylons unless you take old pylons out and put them underground.

00:55:05:27 - 00:55:40:00

Germany and Switzerland have got underground as their preferred norm for aesthetic and health and environmental reasons, whereas we in this country don't appear to be doing anything about that. In Italy, the magnetic waves are measured as a maximum of three micro teslas. That's their preferred norm, whereas in this country is 100 micro teslas. So apart from just these sticky particles, there is something called electrical hypersensitivity, which is again something that the National grid do not recognize as an illness.

00:55:40:02 - 00:56:13:28

But the World Health Organization recognize it and list it as the symptoms of being headaches, nausea and migraines. It makes ordinary people depressed. It makes depressed people very depressed, and it makes very depressed people suicidal. And 10 to 20% of the population suffer from IHS. Finally, I'd like to say about the process. The process has been appallingly bad. It doesn't matter how many times I write or where I go to whatever public forums, I've never given a straight answer to specific questions.

00:56:14:17 - 00:56:48:15

The one question I did ask for several years was finally another place in the country, which was surrounded on three sides by pylons. They've come back eventually with Maltby and West Yorkshire, but Maltby and West Yorkshire, the arms of these three sides are much longer. They're further away from residential homes, where 2500 people live in ruin and the prevailing winds blow the particles away from Maltby, but they blow them on to Rawdon. Thank you very much. I'd like to say just before that's the end of my presentation, but I'd like to thank Mr.

00:56:48:17 - 00:57:05:17

Butler for acknowledging the fact that ordinary people coming up here to speak, it can be quite off putting in a survey done of people's fears in this country. The greatest fear that people had was standing up and speaking in public. Third on the list was death.

00:57:08:13 - 00:57:14:02

Thank you, Mr. Chief. Thank you very much. Okay. Thank you to all our speakers and that many session much appreciated.

00:57:19:12 - 00:57:28:06

And our next speakers we have are Chris Lyles, Nicola Moore, Graham Moore, Gillian Palmer and Philip Palmer.

00:57:49:19 - 00:58:04:07

I don't believe that Mr. Lyles is here, but I'll just double check. We don't have a mr. Lyles amongst you. Okay. Thank you. Um so we'll move on then to, uh, Nicola Moore, please. Um. Good morning. Welcome. Um, you have three minutes. Thank you.

00:58:04:09 - 00:58:06:02

Thank you for the chance to speak.

00:58:07:18 - 00:58:40:17

National Grid's Norwich to Tilbury project will be taking out a massive part of our main farming field, which will make it impossible to work the rest of the area and take taking access through our grade two listed home driveway and straight through my husband's farm and engineering business. We are going to be financially ruined with no regard for us to move forward or diversify our small farm. We have engaged with National Grid meetings to try and point out the mistakes in their approach, and to mitigate the damage to ourselves.

00:58:40:19 - 00:59:06:26

Yet, even though they have admitted many mistakes in their plans. When you go to another meeting, they say nothing has been done about it and we can't promise anything. Fisher, chairman, acting on behalf of National Grid, have been nothing but incompetent with their approach, even admitting at our last meeting a fortnight ago they had not sorted out mistakes as they needed to get that application in. This approach seems unprofessional and incompetent.

00:59:08:12 - 00:59:44:18

The land that is going to be desecrated will never fully recover, and the land drains beneath will be ruined. However, there are no answers given to us how this will be rectified and repaired. The area affected that we live in is particularly rural and has tiny roads with soft verges that can barely cope with the levels of traffic. At the best of times. I cannot foresee how these roads will cope with such a massive infrastructure project planned. We have significant wildlife living on this field, including bats, owls, deers, hares, badgers and birds to name a few.

00:59:45:00 - 01:00:15:06

And these animals and their habitat will literally be lost with nowhere for them to go. It's madness to disrupt wildlife in this manner and then think that some rewilding project will make up for it. Once

these animals lives are disrupted, we have lost them for good. I see no plans from National Grid on what they will do to mitigate this. We also have two local airfields that take off and fly over our field, and the proposed pylon locations, which are Tiburon Airfield and Priory Farm.

01:00:15:08 - 01:00:50:06

National Grid, have not addressed any safety issues regarding this. Every time National Grid tried to communicate, they either don't seem to have their facts correct or they don't have the knowledge to be making the decisions on a local scale, as they do not know the area and they cannot know it as well as the people, as well as the people who have farmed it for over four generations. They would do well to listen to people's opinions, but so far nothing that we have said has been listened to. It can also not be underestimated the immense effect on people's mental health and lives.

01:00:50:08 - 01:00:51:09

Thank you.

01:00:54:04 - 01:00:59:01

Thank you, Mr. Mayor. Um, our next speaker, please, is Graham Moore.

01:00:59:03 - 01:01:00:25

Yeah, I'm going to read it for him.

01:01:01:04 - 01:01:05:22

Of course. No problem. Of course. Thank you. Whenever you're ready.

01:01:06:07 - 01:01:47:09

Thank you for the opportunity to speak. The National Grid Norwich to Tilbury project will be completely ruining the viability of my small arable farm. And it will be slicing through my main growing field. Permanent access is being sought across my field to access another farm's pylon, not the one proposed for my field and shouldn't be needed for the project. It was admitted that this is a mistake in their plans and it would be sorted out. However, I attended a meeting a couple of weeks back and somebody new tells me that this has not been dealt with and they may not be able to do anything about it after themselves stating it was a mistake in their plans, but they said they had to rush to get the plans in on time.

01:01:47:15 - 01:02:19:25

This sort of behaviour of not addressing mistakes and issues raised by people who have lived in the area all their lives, shows their incompetence. I have also raised the matter of access they say is needed for seven years through our home driveway straight through my farm and business. For seven years I can not touch my own driveway, my outbuildings, grow my business, or expand. I've raised the matter with them, saying seven years is not needed to take down old electric lines, which have to be removed before starting the project.

01:02:19:27 - 01:02:51:29

And they have said that UK Power Network were not even replying to their request to speak about such matters. My point being is how can you go ahead with such a destructive project without sorting basic problems to the landowner? This shows me no regard for people's lives and property and a total

lack of organisation. This whole situation is leaving me with no future for my farm or my business or my home. And at no point have National Grid listened to any of my concerns. Thank you for the opportunity to speak.

01:02:54:11 - 01:02:55:03

Thank you.

01:02:57:24 - 01:03:06:08

Okay. Our next speaker, please, is Gillian Palmer. Thank you. Thank you. Welcome. Thank you for my community.

01:03:06:10 - 01:03:46:09

The prospect of 50 metre pylons towering over our tranquil hamlet has stolen our happiness. Barnwell low common is ancient and unspoilt. Its narrow lanes, gently rolling landscape, proximity to the River Thames, wildlife and historic features are highly valued locally. They are also prized by ramblers, cyclists, dog walkers and horse riders. In modern times, there has been no industrial or residential development allowed. To introduce huge industrial structures into this setting will cause incalculable damage to the landscape, and the enjoyment and well-being of those who inhabited it must not be permitted, especially as alternatives exist.

01:03:46:28 - 01:04:22:01

South Norfolk's landscape Assessment describes the gently sloping topography and open landscape of the Thames Valley tributary farmland and its sensitivity to tall and large elements, including large farm buildings and pylons. In their submission, National Grid quote from the relevant landscape assessment. But conveniently they omit any reference to the inappropriateness of pylons by National Grid's own admission. The effects on this landscape are significant and irreversible. They are a large scale of change with a 0.5km.

01:04:22:03 - 01:04:53:25

The impacts are major and significant. Within 1.5km, they remain significant. All residents of Bumble Hill and Low Common are to suffer the significant impact. The proposed pylons intersect our little hamlet. They are less than 200m from four dwellings. They are within 350m of three important listed buildings. National grid have specifically dismissed the harms to both visual amenity and heritage for these properties. The effects are clearly not inconsequential.

01:04:53:27 - 01:05:26:04

They are life changing. If you wish to look at visualizations of the pylons as they pass through our community, you will be disappointed. There are none. The visualizations for Bunuel are from entirely different parts of the village and are both inaccurate and incomplete. 15 years after installation, the landscape impacts are projected to be unchanged. Not surprising when there is no landscape mitigation whatsoever proposed if our landscape and visual amenity are to be destroyed. An extensive programme of planting for some level of screening should be mandatory.

01:05:26:21 - 01:06:13:02

I am to live 300m from two pylons. I have engaged with the consultation process in full, but have not actually been consulted at in-person events. National grid representatives, including their most senior

personnel, have acknowledged my concerns and told me to submit them. One I'd done so. They'd been entirely ignored. I continually hear National Grid vindicating their position with talk of how many people they've consulted, but this has not been a consultation. It has been whitewashing and manipulation. I urge you to look beyond national grids, pages and pages of desktop justification and instead, at the objections of those most affected and at the horrific reality of what is being proposed, I ask that the alternatives to this proposal are giving further and full consideration.

01:06:13:04 - 01:06:13:28

Thank you.

01:06:14:27 - 01:06:20:24

Thank you very much. Um, and then we have Phillip Palmer, please. Thank you. Welcome.

01:06:21:08 - 01:06:22:17

The damage to heritage.

01:06:22:19 - 01:06:23:15

And the historical.

01:06:23:17 - 01:06:26:09

Natural environments in my community is unacceptable.

01:06:26:12 - 01:06:27:23

An ancient hamlet, Low.

01:06:27:25 - 01:06:29:05

Common has 11 listed.

01:06:29:07 - 01:06:29:22

Buildings.

01:06:29:24 - 01:07:00:12

All to be within one kilometre of a pylon. The pylon line is to intersect three of them. Barnard's Hall, personal manor, both mentioned in the Domesday Book, and the 17th century Quaker farm shown here on the Bunuel, a village history book. Uh, it's the top picture. These three heritage buildings are to be within 350m and in full view of the Pylon Run. For their 2024 consultation, National Grid produced a heritage evaluation defining the impact on the settings of Baniyas Hall and Quake Farm as significant negative.

01:07:00:14 - 01:07:30:23

However, in the 2026 submission, the impacts are now low adverse as they are now for almost all listed properties along the length of Norwich to Tilbury. This change requires scrutiny. Quaker farm will have a direct outlook on three parliaments from its frontage. Pylons will be in full view on all approaches to Quake Farm. Undeniably huge. Detrimental to its setting. I live in a grade two curtilage, listening to Quaker Barn immediately adjacent to Quake Farm. My property is to have two pylons 300m away.

01:07:30:28 - 01:08:02:09

They will tower over my single storey barn, and at least one pylon will be visible from all windows on both north and west aspects. Pylon RG 45 will dominate the skyline from every aspect of my garden and curtilage. I have seen computer generated images which show this to be the case, although National Grid have not made these publicly available. My wife and I have asked every consultation opportunity for alternatives and mitigation. None of these requests have been heeded or even acknowledged. We asked for individual consultation and this was refused.

01:08:02:24 - 01:08:35:19

Much of the layout of Benmore Hill and Low Common has been unchanged since medieval times. There are steeply banked sunken roads with sharp bends and umbridge fords. All the roads are single track. During construction, National Grid proposes using these ancient lanes as alternative routes when other local roads are closed. This is madness. It risks damaging historic roads and also poses serious danger to recreational users, dog walkers, horse riders and cyclists. The safety aspects of road closure proposals need scrutiny, including for the access of emergency services when the bridge forwards are flooded, as today.

01:08:36:09 - 01:09:07:12

Finally, please take a very close look at the impact where the pylons are to cross the River Thames at Banwell Hill, land only accessible by centuries old footpath and track. What is proposed here is an ecological disaster. The various protections on the area of land between RG 49 and 50 and pleased for its ecological significance to be recognised, have been ignored. National grid has been determined across the river at this point, despite wide scale damage to mature and veteran trees, to wildlife and to the historic setting.

01:09:07:17 - 01:09:21:09

The historical and ecological significance of my community and the unacceptable impact on heritage properties, including my own, have been completely ignored. I asked for a site visit by the inspectorate to properly understand the harms. Thank you.

01:09:23:16 - 01:09:48:27

Thank you, Mr. Palmer. Um, just as obviously we come to this mini group again, just to reiterate that if you wish to submit any further information, um, that anything that we receive in writing, we do give equal weight to both oral and written submissions. And we do read all such submissions as well. So for instance, your your documents, you know, and the visuals you are showing if you're welcome to submit them. And we can have a look at them in detail. So thank you. Thank you all.

01:09:57:04 - 01:09:58:04

Yes. Thank you.

01:10:01:05 - 01:10:01:24

Okay.

01:10:05:27 - 01:10:19:07

Did you want to come up to a microphone and then we can we can we can all hear better, but if I can. So it's Graham plc, Linda Smith and Norman Stevens. If you just wander it's comfortable and you can put them. What's your question. Sorry.

01:10:20:29 - 01:10:33:29

So my question is when I put forward my speech, am I allowed to mention names? For example? Um, Mr. Pepper, there's nothing derogatory, I just.

01:10:37:08 - 01:10:44:02

You're welcome to mention names itself. Just, you know, avoid libelous statements or vexatious statements or so on. But names in themselves are fine. Thank you.

01:10:44:04 - 01:10:44:19

Thank you very.

01:10:44:21 - 01:10:55:12

Much. No problem. Thank you. Okay, welcome. Um, so our first speaker, please, is, uh, Mr. Pierce. Uh, and you have three minutes. Thank you.

01:10:55:18 - 01:11:33:28

Thank you. I'm a conservation woodsman specializing in the restoration of ancient woodland. We're in a private nature reserve at the bottom of Brick Kiln Lane, which has just been approved as a county wildlife site by Norfolk Wildlife Trust. It goes on the register in March. Along the bottom of the lane is our nature reserve, consisting of two meadows, one with a potential burial mound and two woodlands. One of them probably ancient. Next to our reserve is a three acre overgrown, probably ancient wood pasture, a grazing meadow, and finally another county wildlife site with a spring fed lake.

01:11:34:14 - 01:12:07:03

There is an ancient right of way called Cow Lane and there are many veteran trees, pollards and ancient hedgerows. It is a particularly unspoilt rural area inaccessible by public road. The River Thames, a rare chalk bed stream, weaves its way through the medieval small field system to the south. It's beautiful down there and nature haven. Please come for a site visit at the 2023 non-statutory consultation. We made National Grid aware of the ecological importance of our small woodland.

01:12:07:22 - 01:12:39:29

They changed the route for 2024, saying it was to move the pylons further away from the woodland and private nature reserve at Brick Kiln Lane. The route changed again in 2025 and no longer avoided our special little woodland. South Norfolk Council visited and placed a blanket TPO on the area in March 2025. I asked Norfolk Wildlife Trust if they could help persuade National Grid to change the proposed route to avoid our smallest, possibly ancient, woodland.

01:12:40:11 - 01:13:13:06

They did speak to National Grid and strongly recommended they find a different route. April 2025 I asked her to consider placing pylons RG 48 and RG 49, in a north to south alignment, using deviation pylons to minimize the ecological damage and associated habitat loss. Fisher German replied on the

9th of May 2025, saying this is being reviewed by National Grid and a fuller response will be with you shortly.

01:13:13:24 - 01:13:49:10

I'm still waiting. We keep asking National Grid and Fisher German how they will install the pylon route through our nature reserve, and they just say it depends on the site. That's not good enough. We want to know about our site, but nobody will give us any real details. We are concerned about the harms to nature and wildlife. The loss of mature hedgerows and trees, especially the old dying ones, result in a huge loss of habitat for many communities of insects, birds, owls, bats and other mammals such as mice, deer, fox and badger.

01:13:49:12 - 01:14:05:27

The list goes on. Planting wips to replace trees cannot compensate for the ecological loss this land needs avoiding altogether. There are less damaging options. Better still, go offshore. Thank you very much.

01:14:07:08 - 01:14:18:10

Thank you, Mr. Pearcey. Okay. Thank you sir. Our next speaker, please, is Linda Smith. Welcome. And you have three minutes. Thank you. If you could just. That's it. Thank you.

01:14:18:12 - 01:14:50:13

Good afternoon. My name is Linda Smith. I'm speaking in a personal capacity, though, with the knowledge and approval of Norfolk Gliding Club and Priory Farm aviators. I'm a flying instructor and examiner, and my interest in National Grid's proposals relates to the impact they'll have on flying at Chippenham and Priory Farm airfields. Debenham airfield lies about 25 miles south of Norwich. It's a busy gliding site, home to some 50 gliders and powered aircraft, two flying schools and a model aircraft club.

01:14:50:24 - 01:15:09:06

Ballooning events and the provision of helicopter support operations, including for the air ambulance and police, are due to start this summer. Priory farm is a kilometre to the west of Tübingen. It's home to about 30 light aircraft and host ballooning events and fly ins from other airfields throughout the year.

01:15:10:23 - 01:15:44:28

National grid proposes to erect a line of pylons up to 200ft high, which will run north to south, just 750m to the west of Priory Farm. The dangers to aircraft flying out of Tübingen and Priory Farm should be obvious to provide some context. The CAA has confirmed that the safeguarded radius around both airfields should be five kilometres. National grid is clearly responsible for ensuring that its proposals don't present a safety risk to aviation.

01:15:45:03 - 01:16:26:19

The National Planning Policy Framework makes it clear that local authorities should avoid any development close to an airfield, which is incompatible with existing or potential aviation operations. The National Policy Statement one states that it is essential that new energy infrastructure is developed collaboratively alongside aerodromes, so that safety operations and capabilities are not

adversely affected by new energy infrastructure. When National Grid made its initial route presentation, it hadn't consulted either airfield and seemed to be oblivious to their existence and the risks to aviation safety that its proposals present.

01:16:27:16 - 01:16:58:21

Despite representations made by NGC, PFA and others. To date its proposals are Unchanged. National grid seeks to justify its intransigence by relying on an impact assessment, whose methodology the CAA has described as flawed and unsafe. Although it is acknowledged that aviation safety issues at Debenham and Priory Farm still need to be resolved, it has failed to engage in any meaningful way, in particular to provide documents.

01:17:00:02 - 01:17:26:11

The optimum would be for National Grid to abandon its pylon proposals in favour of offshore routing. Failing that, the onus is on it to either where reroute the pylons so as to remain outside the five kilometre safeguarded zones around both airfields, or where the pylons infringe the five kilometre safeguarded zones. To take the cable underground. Thank you.

01:17:27:21 - 01:17:36:11

Thank you very much. Okay, so our next speaker is Norman Stevens. Welcome, Mr. Stevens. And you have three minutes. Thank you. Thank you.

01:17:36:24 - 01:18:09:24

I live in Fort Saint Peter. My home is on higher ground above the River Thames Valley. The proposed Norwich to Tilbury route and pylons, RG 36 to 40, would pass close by my property, with RG 38 only about 150m from my home. The prospect of having ugly pylons and high voltage overhead lines so close to my home has caused my wife and I unbearable stress and worry, and is affecting our physical and mental well-being.

01:18:10:05 - 01:18:18:00

Well-Being. For nearly four years now. National Grid have blighted the enjoyment of living, of living where we do.

01:18:19:21 - 01:18:45:24

Our property was included in their Residential Visual Amenity assessment but scoped out. Quoting their words, the property would be affected by a moderate change of visual amenity, but my pictures highlight the enormous change and the awful prospect that the future holds for us. Homes should be a haven, not a place of anxiety.

01:18:47:13 - 01:19:18:03

Norwich Tilbury would create a high risk of pollution for the chalk stream, River Thames and its tributaries. Construction, where the route crosses the river and surface runoff into the river from building the Hall Road and pylons on higher ground through Fawcett are a serious concern, especially as there is a colony of rare and protective native white clawed crayfish identified and confirmed to be present in the River Thames.

01:19:18:20 - 01:19:59:04

Construction and maintenance of Norwich to Tilbury would pose a serious threat of extinction for this colony of crayfish. These are protected under schedule five of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, and listed as a UK Biodiversity Action Plan priority species. As far as I know, National Grid has failed to identify this priority species in their surveys to date. If that is the case, it demonstrates a lack of thoroughness and scientific competency in establishing baseline data on biodiversity and ecosystems.

01:19:59:18 - 01:20:32:06

This is an area that needs thorough investigation and questioning in great detail. And it also begs the question what else have they missed along the Norwich to Tilbury route? The Norwich to Tilbury project would be a disaster for wildlife in general. The fields next to my home are a hotspot for hares, which are in decline. At least 20 species of red and amber listed birds frequent or nest near my home. The construction of the hall road and pylons would destroy trees.

01:20:32:08 - 01:20:55:08

Hedgerows completely ruined this local ecosystem that supports and sustains these endangered species. Destruction that would be repeated all the way from Norwich to Tilbury. This project is blighting our lives. It will destroy landscape, habitat, wildlife risk, bird strikes on the high voltage lines and the plans for it must be scrapped.

01:20:56:23 - 01:21:14:00

Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Stevens. And as always, if you'd like to submit your images as well at deadline one, that'd be useful. Thank you. Okay. Thank you everybody. We've now heard from everybody registered to speak in this session. Um, is there anybody here today who has not spoken and who would wish to be heard?

01:21:18:08 - 01:21:48:20

Okay, I'm not seeing any hands up in the room or online, so thank you for that. Um, just to reiterate, if you could submit what you've said in writing at deadline one that first day to 26th of February, and the applicant will provide a written response at that same time. Thank you to all of you in the room and online for your participation and for your submissions today. Um, we do appreciate them and we have taken them into account and making copious notes. So thank you very much.

01:21:49:02 - 01:22:13:18

Um, a digital recording of the proceedings today will be made available as soon as possible on the project page of the National Infrastructure website. Um, should any party still make to wish to make a contribution to this open floor hearing, but feel that they're unable to do so today? Then please again, make your contribution in writing by deadline one. Uh, the time is now. 1223. Thank you again. And the hearing is now closed. Thank you.