



Hearing Transcript

Project:	Norwich to Tilbury
Hearing:	Open Floor Hearing 2 (OFH2) – Part 2
Date:	12 February 2026

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

It is not a verbatim text of what was said at the above hearing. The content was produced using artificial intelligence voice to text software. It may, therefore, include errors and should be assumed to be unedited.

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

00:00:04:29 - 00:00:35:20

Thank you very much. The time is now 11:20 and we will resume the hearing. Um, can we restart the live stream? And can I confirm with the case team that the live stream has restarted? Thank you very much. So for our next group of five, can I call to the table or ask you to turn your cameras on? Suzanne. Bulwell. Davies. Graham Cooke. Brook. Sorry.

00:00:36:03 - 00:00:45:00

William Doran, Mike Lambert representing Oldham parish council and Helen Pardoe.

00:00:58:03 - 00:01:11:02

Okay. Thank you very much. I have everybody here, three in the room and two virtually first. And we have, uh, Suzanne Powell. Davies, please. And you have three minutes. Please start when you're ready.

00:01:11:24 - 00:01:44:29

Mom, says Suzanne Davies, thank you for the opportunity to be heard. I live in the ancient and historic village of Writtle, home to Iron Age and Roman settlers owned by kings. The first king of Scotland. King John owned a hunting lodge, Writtle Deer Park and ancient Woodland, home to the first radio broadcast which took place in 1920, an event that changed the world. National grid have no compunction and think it's okay to harm our beautiful village, which is not respected or afforded.

00:01:45:01 - 00:02:16:06

Innovation. With proposals of alternate technology and 23 50 meter high pylons. Hall Roads and works compounds. Around the west side of the village, a ring of steel across prime farmland. Taking more land out of food production and further impacting our country's food security. Our ancient hedgerows are teeming with rich with wildlife and above and below ground, including red kites, buzzards, bats, owls, deer, badgers all at risk. Thousands of farmland, birds.

00:02:16:15 - 00:02:48:04

Existence is now in danger as they will lose their habitat when trees hedgerows are rubbed out. Concrete and whole roads will cover their ground nesting sites. Can I ask National Grid why they have not included farmland birds in any of their 400 documents? What mitigation are they going to put in place for farmland birds? Our national grid aware that at this very moment, the sixth of the 22nd of February, there is a national survey by the Game and Wildlife Conservation Trust called the Big Farmland Bird Count.

00:02:48:15 - 00:03:23:07

National grid purportedly stated that they would fill fell over 1 million trees and 1.6 million hetero plants as part of the project. Writtle has many protected loans, including Nathan Nathan's loan, which have beautiful over 100 year old oak and ash trees. What is the age of the trees to be felled? What is National Grid going to replace 100 year old trees as part of biodiversity net gain? I note yesterday, Tuesday that Emily Tetley Jones of the Pipeline Association, was talking about significant risk to oil pipelines due to interference of AC pylons.

00:03:23:25 - 00:03:55:19

National grid what is the significant risk explosion fire risks to human life? What are you planning to do to mitigate or eliminate the risk? What risk management policies and procedures will they be in place? How a national planning National grid plans to consult and reassure residents. Pylons have been placed on high ground despite being asked to move them, and I'm referencing 1722178. But there probably is more contrary to the requirement of the Holford rules. Do National Grid not follow any of the planning rules.

00:03:55:25 - 00:04:23:18

Sadly, the line will be seen from Highlands Park Parklands, designed by landscape gardener Humphry Repton. If National Grid had listened to the people of East Anglia rightly asking for alternatives to Norwich to Tilbury to be considered, then they would have had a resolution to their problems sooner. It appears that we are to be the sacrificial lamb, and as such I have a complete lack of trust and confidence in National Grid. Thank you ma'am sirs, for listening.

00:04:24:00 - 00:04:25:10

Thank you for concluding.

00:04:28:00 - 00:04:37:01

And then I turn to, uh, Mister Crook. Um, virtually. And, uh, you have three minutes. Please start when you're ready.

00:04:37:24 - 00:05:16:25

Good morning. I'm Graham Crooke, and I'd like to thank you for the chance to represent myself today. I've lived in Writtle for just over 15 years. An area surrounded by ancient woodland and mostly flat, arable farmland or green belt land. The proposed pylons would cause significant harm to the local environment, devastating the rich nature that is abundant along the route since day one. My view is that the National Grid have presented on their preferred option. At no point if they consulted on viable options or, in my opinion, given sufficient evidence, that alternatives have been properly explored. I've been consistently told by National Grid that the project must be live by 2030 to allow the East Anglian wind farms a connection to the grid, so that the power can be used to allow our economy to grow.

00:05:16:28 - 00:05:50:12

However, the high energy report states that the power would not be needed for years after this. The right thing to do here would be for National Grid to be asked to provide substantial evidence on fully costed alternatives, and where undergrounding that this is HVDC not rushing into a pylons first approach, particularly when elsewhere in the UK, undergrounding is preferred. In the immediate area, the pilots would curve around Writtle, and on one of the visualisations from the Highwood Road, you would see at least 18 pylons far exceeding the visible distance from the national grid. Documentation. Why should the countryside be trashed when there are better and more viable alternatives.

00:05:51:03 - 00:06:21:06

On a more personal level, I have serious concerns over the risk of EMF to my young family, with the property being just over 100m from the proposed route. The National Grid EMF expert could not provide me with sufficient evidence that the consultations to resolve my concerns. I even asked if he would live at that distance from pylons and feel safe. To which he said he wouldn't choose to. I also

have not heard a convincing answer as to why pipelines hundreds of meters from the pylons would have to be protected. Yet I will not be affected in my own home. Locally, flooding is of great concern.

00:06:21:08 - 00:06:51:12

Having hundreds of tonnes of concrete uphill and a whole road will do nothing to help this and is likely to significantly increase the flooding and also potentially affect my property. I've been repeatedly advised that I will not be affected. I acknowledge that the project does not touch my land, yet I am surrounded by a field that is all within the draft ordinance and a main road being used to connect to the haul road. Hundreds of lorries per day will pass within metres of the house, a property designated as a heritage asset, which will be affected by the vibrations.

00:06:51:18 - 00:07:22:00

Then there would be the noise and dust every day for the years of construction. I'm told this won't impact me, but local knowledge tells me otherwise as I live in the direction of the prevailing wind from the proposed route across open fields. I strongly contested not being affected as a result of the plans. I'm unlikely to be able to sell the property and if I did, could well have negative equity. Many years of work and mortgage payments all gone through the years of uncertainty and knowing that at present there is nothing I can do about the proposal to at least be financially unaffected if this did go ahead.

00:07:22:06 - 00:07:43:01

The ongoing battle has already taken far too much of my time. Valuable time that should have been better spent with my young family. Time I will not get again. In summary, I do not feel that the National Grid have listened adequately to the concerns raised throughout the project or addressed these in a satisfactory way. There must be more hearings around alternatives with these being fully costed. Thank you.

00:07:47:12 - 00:07:58:02

Thank you very much. And I now turn to Mr. Durham. Uh, you have three minutes. Good morning. We fully understand the.

00:07:58:04 - 00:08:32:19

Need for clean energy, but National Grid are fudging the figures in an effort to justify using 100 year old technology to solve a 21st century problem. They've costed this old fashioned fix without taking any genuine consideration of the environment, the wildlife, the countryside, and ignoring the fact that hundreds of people like US 73 year old pensioners now have a home that we've invested their life's work into, there's currently virtually unsellable. We'd hope to downsize for a comfortable retirement now an impossibility. We've been advised if we were able to sell at all, it would have been at a loss of around 220 zero zero £0.

00:08:32:21 - 00:09:12:04

So we're paying for your pylons. There are hundreds, if not thousands more like us along the route, but this cost has not been factored in at all. And as for the current level of compensation being considered National Grid. Hang your heads in shame. As a comparison, home owners affected by HS2 were compensated at full unblinded market price plus 10%. Why are you simply not using HVDC, undergrounding or an offshore integrated grid, or even do what America and Belgium are doing and

switch to carbon aluminium composite conductors and restarting the existing network, thus trebling the capacity without causing any further disruption to our countryside.

00:09:12:06 - 00:09:44:14

21st Century Solutions. Any of these methods will deliver the desired clean energy upgrade you are seeking, without the destructive effects on our rapidly diminishing unspoilt countryside. Two years down the road and nobody will even know the cables existed. Depending on whose figures you look at. It may even be cheaper to do it that way. However, never in my lifetime has a major UK infrastructure project been completed on time or budget. The true cost of this project is not just measured in money, it must take into account the lives of the people it directly affects.

00:09:44:16 - 00:10:21:02

The fact is that other countries faced with the same problem have chosen to adopt the previously mentioned methods, rather than erect more pylons. Ed Miliband called us NIMBYs. Yet a recent planning application for a housing development near his home was successfully overturned by his wife, Dame Justine Thornton. NIMBYism at its finest. One rule for us. Another for him. Offshore wind farms have been coming online for years, and National Grid have known they were struggling with capacity, paying millions of pounds to windfarm operators not to supply power that they could not use while paying shareholders dividends.

00:10:21:08 - 00:10:56:28

Successive governments have encouraged us to invest in solar power, and we have only to have the feed in tariff trashed and slashed to next to nothing because National Grid had not invested in the infrastructure and couldn't utilise the additional power. National grid are totally inept and are now frantically playing catch up at our expense by throwing the countryside and us under the bus to serve the shareholders, who are mostly overseas investors. Ironically, British Steel is no longer able to supply virgin steel due to the closure of caused by high energy costs.

00:10:57:00 - 00:11:02:10

So the steel for these monstrosities will now be coming from China. How green is that?

00:11:06:00 - 00:11:07:05

Thank you very much.

00:11:10:21 - 00:11:20:05

Then I turn to Mr. Lambert, speaking on behalf of the Irish Council. You have five minutes. Thank you very much.

00:11:20:16 - 00:11:26:00

Thank you. My name is Mike Lambert, and I'm chair of Oldham Parish Council. Oldham is a small village.

00:11:26:02 - 00:11:57:06

Four and a half miles west of Colchester, with a stable population of 490, meaning residents have strong connections to the local environment. 25% of Oldham's population is over 65, compared to a national average of 16%. Older residents spend more time in their village and would be more

adversely affected, particularly by the construction phase impacting on a significant proportion of their remaining time with us. Oldham would host 4.7km of the overhead line and 12 pylons which would dissect the parish.

00:11:57:15 - 00:12:29:08

The pylons themselves will encircle our village and, with the overhead lines, form an intrusive feature in the landscape. These damaging proposals will cause harm to interests of acknowledged importance. Of the 225 listed buildings identified in the scoping report. Oldham has a disproportionate 19 or 8%. There are a further 20 listed buildings just outside the scoping corridor but in the parish, including some grade one and Ford Street Conservation Area. Our grade two listed church is the tallest building in the village at 30m, including the weathercock.

00:12:29:24 - 00:13:10:08

The 12 pylons will all be 50% taller, dwarfing aspire and adversely affecting the setting of the building. The church and surrounding trees have been in place since 1855, but the trees still do not screen it. So how could new planting be expected to hide 50 metre pylons? The village sits on prominent high land between the cone valley and Roman river valley. The cone valleys are valued landscape within north Essex and as such should be protected from inappropriate development. The Roman river valley to the south is less prominent in topography, but when looking south and public rights of way, crossing the marked State of Sudbury branch line is a predominantly natural landscape with no significant buildings or structures in view.

00:13:10:10 - 00:13:50:00

An unusual feature in north Essex, and one that should be protected without prejudice to the parish councils objection. In the event the orders confirmed, there should be much more protection to these landscapes, replacing lost trees and hedging at a much higher than one for one ratio. The impact on habitat, landscape, biodiversity and residential amenity will be devastating both during the 4 to 5 years of construction, and in the longer term, from the visual intrusion. Construction will close eight of our 19 public rights of way, equating to over 7000m of path pylons will be visible from every one of the 19 public rights of way, and all will be harmed and suffer loss of amenity.

00:13:50:24 - 00:14:25:07

Several bus businesses in the village rely on tourism, leisure and the character of the village. For example, the Shoulder of Mutton Tea Room and the 100 year old crops fruit farm and other rural enterprise. All are predicated on the natural beauty, special character of the area and all will be harmed by the proposed pylons, especially during construction. Oldham Parish Council supports the case presented by Essex Suffolk North Norfolk Pylon Group, arguing that National Grid is unable to follow or comply with the Holford rules. Statutory consultation has been predetermined and only the single option of overhead lines has ever been presented.

00:14:25:09 - 00:14:57:05

This falls foul of the governing principles. We're also concerned to learn that minimal opportunity appears to have been given during the examination to considering whether there were better options available to National Grid, and we request this as others is reviewed. Given the strength of opposition and the strength of evidence presented on the alternatives. Consultation fatigue has inevitably affected our residents, who are worn down by the sheer volume of material and technicalities being presented.

Despite all the consultation engagement residents have spent time on, there has been little change achieved.

00:14:57:27 - 00:15:39:03

This has been a procedural process, not a meaningful engagement. In other words, decide, announce, defend, not engage. Discuss, decide. National grid has now ruled out alternative pylon designs, leaving no meaningful mitigation measure available. An examination of the Outline Code of Construction Practice referenced to be provided indicates that working hours will be 10 to 12 hours a day, seven days a week, with scope for a wide range of activity outside these hours, which will cause unacceptable disturbance. G g 30 in table 6.1 gives insufficient guarantee of a proactive dialogue between contractors and residents or the parish council without prejudice to the council's objection in the event.

00:15:39:06 - 00:16:10:07

The orders confirmed the code should include a commitment to establish a formal liaison forum with each parish affected by the development, and a requirement to have regular dialogue and up to date information on construction progress and timetable. An obligation to provide funding to local planning authorities should also be included to ensure sufficient resources for adequate monitoring and enforcement. Community benefits have not been defined, and discounts to energy bills cannot compensate for either short term or long term physical impacts. Government is serious about green energy for the 21st century.

00:16:10:09 - 00:16:24:29

They must be delivered with 21st century green infrastructure and that means an integrated offshore solution. Oldham Parish Council and our community hereby support, endorse and adopt all the submissions made by Essex, Suffolk Norfolk Islands Action Group. Thank you.

00:16:27:19 - 00:16:28:23

Thank you very much.

00:16:35:17 - 00:16:44:09

Finally, in this group, then we have Helen Pardue and you have three minutes. Please start when you're ready.

00:16:44:24 - 00:17:23:24

And a doctor working as a consultant surgeon in Essex. I live approximately 50m from the nearest pylon and power cable at the Waltham Gap. I request a review and change to the proposed pile on TB 141 and associated pylons and the high voltage cables overhead at the Waltham Gap. This is on the basis of negative health impact of the cables, in particularly the detrimental lower height, wider spread pylons proposed through the 100 meter wide Waltham Gap. Issues are raised, are supported by scientific papers published in reputable academic journals, and many of the papers regarding harmful effects have been published in the last ten years, which is after the initial proposal for this grid upgrade.

00:17:23:26 - 00:17:54:06

This new information should therefore change the planning proposal for overhead cables at the Waltham Gap. Low level electromagnetic field exposure from overhead cables causes well-established biological and health effects, so cables and pylons must be treated as a health hazard. The harmful effects on human health are reduction in melatonin, phosphine, or flashing lights caused by emfs activating the optic nerve. Noise pollution from the cables, worse in wet weather and long periods of dry spells, which is exactly the climate of Essex and the Waltham Gap.

00:17:54:08 - 00:18:38:16

Fourfold increase in female infertility for those living within 500m of cable. Increasing depression and anxiety. A non statistically significant increase in adult cancers, and all of these effects multiplied as health hazards to children. The closer you are to a cable, the stronger the electromagnetic field. At the Waltham Gap. Many of the 5000 plus local residents will pass within just a few meters from pylon TV, one for one every day, and the cables will only be a maximum of 25m from them as they go about their daily business for Iran, walking their dogs, walking to the bus stop, going to the docks in Little Waltham farm buildings works at the BT telephone interchange and some houses in the area, including mine and no more than 100m from the cables.

00:18:38:18 - 00:19:11:27

It's not acceptable that we will all be exposed to higher density, emfs and increased health hazards than the normal population in North Norfolk. Planning decisions have protected the environment and used underground cables in the Dedham Vale planning. You've protected an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and used underground cables, and the population of the Waltons may be neither outstanding nor beautiful. But you, the representatives of the planning authority, have a personal and professional duty to protect the population to the same extent, and there are many of us who will have our health negatively affected if pylons are positioned at the Waltham Gap.

00:19:11:29 - 00:19:27:12

And for this reason, we the people demand a change of approach at the Waltham Gap to either underground the cables or reconsider previously rejected routes or alternatives, avoiding the Waltham and adjacent villages. I thank you for your consideration of these points.

00:19:29:02 - 00:19:30:09

Thank you very much.

00:19:32:12 - 00:19:35:05

They return to me.

00:19:37:19 - 00:19:41:05

And we shall move to the next groupings.

00:19:43:25 - 00:19:46:03

In this next grouping, I have

00:19:48:03 - 00:19:51:13

Charles McLean, Danny McLean,

00:19:53:05 - 00:20:04:05

Mark pin, Michael Steele. And on the agenda we have Adam Whips. But I've been informed that they have not joined yet.

00:20:14:24 - 00:20:20:28

Okay. Thank you very much. So if we start, then with Mr. Macklem.

00:20:22:13 - 00:20:52:16

In the preliminary Environmental Impact Assessment at the April 24th National Grid, concluded that the potential negative residual effect from construction, operation and maintenance is likely to be significant on the landscape, visual and historic environments in Greater Little Waltham, and no other location would either be more permanent. Negative effect on this scale. It contains the only two conservation areas along the whole route that we predict negatively impacted the only registered parkland along the route that we negatively impacted, and one of the five scheduled monuments.

00:20:52:18 - 00:21:26:15

And likely there's going to be 70 permanent negative effects in this area. The presence of two conservation areas in one short section is not coincidental. It reflects a historic cohesion and sensitivity of this landscape. Rule two of the Holford rule states avoid smaller areas of high amenity value or scientific and scientific interests, and where possible, choose routes which minimize the effects and settings on archaeological and historical interest, included conservation, listed buildings, listed parks and gardens, ancient monuments, and in section F between pylons 132 and 144.

00:21:26:17 - 00:21:59:19

There are the following within one kilometre of pylons two grade one listed buildings, two grade two star listed buildings, 73 grade two listed buildings, one grade two listed parkland, one scheduled monument, two conservation areas, and three woodlands. For these reasons, I strongly support the Great War from alternatives set out in the Design and Development Report 23. The alignment of the plan to open farmland, reducing impacts on heritage building and avoiding both great and little wolfram. Throughout the consultations, statutory and non-statutory, the pilot lights have changed between short and tall pylons.

00:21:59:21 - 00:22:34:09

This made replying to the consultations all the more difficult. Hidden amongst the 552 documents for the DCO National Grid have stated flexibility has been retained to revert to standard lattice pylons. This may include removing one of the three pylons and a slight change location for remaining two. In the consultation feedback document on page 5236. It states the projects will progress using the tool pylons. This is a fundamental change has not been made obvious through all the documents and maps, leading to people being misinformed potentially seem deceiving.

00:22:34:11 - 00:23:07:03

They've only hidden that information in two documents. Many of the documents National Grid relies appears to rely heavily on the grade one listed status of Langley's to justify the lower pylons. However, as the current owner and of Langley's are, views of the long term custodians of this state have been largely ignored. Instead, National Grid have chosen to prioritize Historic England's

position, despite the fact that Historic England have not engaged with us directly or even submitted a response to the DCO. If the current route is kept, we would prefer the tall pylons.

00:23:07:10 - 00:23:39:28

Um, between 136142 rather than the current low height pylons, and the TB 143 is moved further north to help mitigate the impact on the grade two listed farmhouse. To summarise, the question is not whether grid reinforcement is needed. The question is whether this particular alignment through this particular historic landscape represents the least harmful option, given the concentration of assets. Given the. Given the availability of an alternative and given the scale of permanent change proposed. I respectfully submit that it does not.

00:23:40:03 - 00:23:42:18

So I ask you to draw to a conclusion.

00:23:42:20 - 00:24:04:27

So can I just finish the two sentences? I therefore ask the examination board to conclude that either the great wolf and alternative should be adopted, or further modifications to section F is required to properly comply with whole rule two and statutory heritage duties. Section F warrants different treatment because it demonstrates more sensitivity. Once these pylons were erected, this landscape has changed for generations. Thank you.

00:24:05:05 - 00:24:05:28

Thank you.

00:24:07:17 - 00:24:13:24

Okay. Can we then turn to Jenny McLean? You have that three minutes.

00:24:13:26 - 00:24:44:16

Good morning. I fully understand that offshore energy has to be brought onshore, but that does not remove the responsibility to choose between the least harmful option. National grid only consulted on its preferred option. Consultation is not meaningful if the alternatives have effectively already been ruled out. The public have been asked to comment on a decision that appeared largely predetermined. This is not fair or open minded approach. It narrows the discussion before it even begins. I therefore object to this DCO. Schedule nine of the Electricity Act 1989.

00:24:44:18 - 00:25:18:05

Pieces that places a duty on national grid to have regard to the desirability of preserving natural beauty, conserving flora and fauna, and protecting sites, buildings and objects of architectural or historic interest. That duty is not optional. It is not secondary to coastal convenience. Yet the way this consultation has been handled suggests that financial efficiency has been placed above heritage and environmental protection. If alternatives are dismissed simply because they're not the cheapest or the shortest, then the wider statutory responsibilities under schedule nine are effectively being sidelined.

00:25:18:07 - 00:25:51:19

That should concern all of us. My second point is that I live in a grade two listed house. According to Historic England, listed buildings are of national importance and of worth protecting. Once home is

done, it cannot be undone within one kilometre of the proposed pylons. In Great Waltham there are 83 listed buildings. That is a remarkable concentration of nationally important heritage assets in a small rural area. The introduction of large industrial scale pylons into this historic landscape will permanently change its character and setting.

00:25:51:22 - 00:26:23:00

The setting of a listed building is part of its significance. Once those views and that landscape scape context are altered, the harm is lasting in Great Waltham alone. Sorry. My third point is that loss of trees and hedgerows in Great Waltham alone, numerous meters of hedgerows will be destroyed, as well as 67 trees are set to be felled, a further 24th May also be felled and 26 are to be managed. These are not just numbers on a plan, they are mature trees, part of established hedgerows and wildlife corridors that shape the character of our countryside.

00:26:23:07 - 00:26:53:20

Trees and hedgerows support birds, bats and other wildlife. They also absorb carbon. They soften the landscape. They take decades to grow, but only hours to remove. How can the destruction of established hedgerows and dozens of trees be justified in the name of green energy? Green energy should not mean sacrificing the very environment it claims to protect. If pylons must be used, then an alternative exists for Great Waltham. It has already been identified. It will reduce harm to heritage heritage assets.

00:26:53:22 - 00:27:23:08

It would protect the historic landscape setting and lessen the environmental and community impact. For all these reasons, I'm asking that the route be changed to avoid the Waltham Gap and the Great Waltham Alternative as set out in the Design and Development Report 2023, we properly adopted. This is not about opposing infrastructure. It is a it is about choosing the route that causes the least harm. I urge you to give proper weight to the statutory duties and select the great wholesome alternative.

00:27:24:09 - 00:27:25:15

Thank you very much.

00:27:28:09 - 00:27:34:14

We now turn to Mister Pim. You have a three minutes and start when you are ready.

00:27:35:03 - 00:28:08:08

Hello everyone. My name is Mark and I'm a local person and a member of the East Anglia group. My first request is to the Pain Inspectorate. Do not make this decision without walking some of this route. I would also recommend they ask the Secretary of State to do the same. We've heard about Writtle, Ardley, screams, Park, Ford and Norwich, all areas where I'm very familiar with. I spend most of my life in the countryside walking. Honestly, you've got to walk the route to see the reality of the devastation that's been proposed. It's very serious and it's going to have a huge impact on our wildlife.

00:28:08:14 - 00:28:41:02

Before I move to hedgerows and survey coverage, I'm briefly going to ask that the planning inspector also look at the national energy security and resilience over pylons, all technology, old technology and

inherently more vulnerable to extreme cold, isolated and high winds, storm events and deliberate interference. There are alternative technologies that the panel's heard today. This is not contested by many of the experts. In periods when the UK energy resilience resilience is a state of national priority.

00:28:41:04 - 00:29:11:14

It is concerned that the full range of resilient options does not appear to have been assessed transparently or in accordance with Green Book principles. I fear that old people would get a massive cold snap in the next 2 or 3 years. May actually be very, very vulnerable because we've hollowed out our energy infrastructure, including gas, which is just in time system. All factual. And I would ask that the panel actually look into this in terms of the national resilience before we push ahead with pylons.

00:29:11:23 - 00:29:41:26

I'd like to just briefly also mention the inadequate survey coverage is a tiny percentage of the actual total, um, kilometers. We're talking about the 180 kilometre route. It's tiny. You've already heard about the farm birds and so forth. It's literally a small percentage. And before we get into the detail, um, we all know that, um, drones don't cut it. They're not able to get into the underlay of the undergrowth where the animals and the insects.

00:29:41:28 - 00:30:13:01

Over 400 and an average head low rest. So I would ask that this is considered national grid or asked to do a more comprehensive survey. My final point is around hedgerows, trees and wildlife coverage in general. Originally it was leaked at one. Allegedly that 1.8 million trees and 6 million hedges were allegedly leaked and then retracted. That's just astonishing. Number of trees. National grid refused to actually tell us the detail and more importantly, the alternative plans. Just one last line.

00:30:13:03 - 00:30:41:07

A similar project I was involved in at a distance, the bar side port development. They laid down plans to detail a 117 hectare wildlife sanctuary and habitat habitat Creation Scheme to offset the loss of intertidal mudflats and salt marshes. National grid at this stage. Hadn't even suggested how they're going to replace the environment they're going to decimate. That's it. Thank you ever so much for listening to my points. Thank you.

00:30:42:11 - 00:30:43:14

Thank you very much.

00:30:45:25 - 00:30:50:29

And we then turn to Mr. Steele. You have three minutes. Thank you.

00:30:51:01 - 00:31:04:05

Thank you. Thank you very much. Actually, I'm councillor Mike Steele. I'm the Essex County councillor, I'm the Chelmsford City councillor and I'm parish councillor for the communities to the west of Chelmsford, and I've been serving for the last 25 years.

00:31:04:07 - 00:31:08:16

10 a.m. I speaking on behalf of yourself or the or the council?

00:31:08:18 - 00:31:15:00

I'm speaking on behalf of myself, but I'm just pointing out that I am a local authority representative.

00:31:15:02 - 00:31:20:27

So just time again will start to time again because I interrupted you. But you have three minutes.

00:31:20:29 - 00:31:59:17

Okay. Thank you very much. Um, ten of the parishes that do run through my county council area. I directly affected by the pylons. Hence I am deep in all the issues around it. So. But given that these hearings are focused on how the application will be examined, I'm not going to repeat all of my objections. Instead, I want to highlight something that's already come up so far. I want to highlight a specific design issue, and it was raised by National Grid themselves and it was in document ANC, ERC, env Dash RFP 0031, Volume six, chapter four, page 36.

00:31:59:19 - 00:32:30:01

Basically, this document describes a pre submission design change in the Waltham in the Waltham Gap that we talked about, which is the conservation area between Great and Little Waltham. And it's a narrow pinch point and it's known locally as the Waltham Gap. Now National Grid have replaced in their design the standard 50 metre pylons, TV 136 to 142, with lower 40 metre lattice pylons, which require a wider stance and a heavier frame.

00:32:30:13 - 00:33:02:00

However, the main issue of this is it also introduces an additional pylon. TV 141 positioned one sorry, one of which TV 141 is positioned immediately beside Chelmsford Road, which is the main pedestrian and vehicle route between the two villages and indeed integrate into Chelmsford. From extensive engagements with the residents. I know that the proposed siting of a lower height TB one for one in that position is a major local concern.

00:33:02:16 - 00:33:23:14

The thing is, from a distance, the top of reduced height pylons may be less visible, but close up. Their bulkier form is ugly and overbearing and closer to the road, closer to the Great Walton Conservation Area and closer to housing. Crucially, the National Grid document explicitly requests.

00:33:23:16 - 00:33:24:01

One.

00:33:24:03 - 00:33:59:06

Minute flexibility to revert to standard height pylons. Once the technical details are finalised. This could also remove the need for the extra pilot and allow relocation. I strongly urge the examining authority to consider, and if possible, require this design change. Reinstating just two standard height pylons in this section would allow TB 141 to be moved further from the conservation area and main road, and so on into the middle of the field. Whilst I would prefer that the route did not pass through the Waltham Gap at all if it must.

00:33:59:08 - 00:34:17:10

This is a real opportunity to improve the visual impact on local residents and the historic environment, with no disadvantage or additional cost to National Grid or even a saving to National Grid with one fewer pylon. A win for both sides. Thank you.

00:34:18:27 - 00:34:20:03

Thank you very much.

00:34:23:26 - 00:34:28:18

I will just do a final check. Is Mr. Whipps with us?

00:34:36:00 - 00:34:47:10

No, I don't appear to have anything there. So we shall move on and go back into the main bits. So if we move on to the next group of people.

00:34:50:12 - 00:35:04:21

I have identified a number of people here in this group, which, um, includes a mr. Upton, but I'm not sure if Mr. Upton has registered. Is Mr. Upton in the room?

00:35:06:25 - 00:35:08:02

No. He's not.

00:35:14:05 - 00:35:45:22

Can we have Nicola McGuire and Paul Lanham here? I have a mr. was lucky here, but apparently he's informed us that he's only available after 12 a.m.. So we shall move until later. After the other speakers and see if Mr. was lucky is with us at that stage. So can we have Nicola maguire? Thank you very much.

00:35:47:16 - 00:35:48:08

Thank you.

00:35:48:22 - 00:35:49:19

Firstly, I'd like.

00:35:49:21 - 00:35:50:06

To take this.

00:35:50:08 - 00:36:27:27

Opportunity to thank the panel for allowing us to speak, and I'd like to acknowledge the phenomenal work that Rosie Pearson and her committee do, and their unwavering commitment to protect the environment and communities along these 180km swathe. The endless support she and her team have shown the communities all voluntary, fighting for better outcomes than the status quo. Also, I'd like to draw your attention to the fact that this group is not trying to delay this project in any way or increase its cost, but in fact find better alternatives that will reduce the harm that and this project will cause.

00:36:27:29 - 00:36:58:02

I'd like you to read, if you may. Um, leaders not lagers. Um, which highlights, um, alternatives to pylons and HVAC National grid at every press release possible have quoted offshore and undergrounding is 5 to 10 times more expensive than pylons. But when you're not pricing work using the Treasury Green Book analysis, you can make any project seem cheaper. Therefore, this project will go over budget.

00:36:59:13 - 00:37:30:26

We should be insisting on an independent audit using Treasury Green Book to protect the environment and communities, and for best practice and best outcome. This is, after all, public money being spent and lots of elements have been missed because they're not using the Treasury Green Book by being community benefits. National grid have allowed 10% contingency, even though Treasury Green Book states that it should be 40%.

00:37:30:28 - 00:38:07:11

House and business impacts aren't included. Natural capital impacts aren't. When comparing other projects like Hinkley Pointing Point and scaling this up to 180km and applying. Treasury green book entity will equate to a cost over £8 billion. I think we all need to sit down and realise, um, you know, the national grid are pulling the wool over our eyes. Really? Um, they basically their narrative is pylons, whatever the cost. I've attended some of the consultations over the last few years and have asked the same question regarding health.

00:38:08:10 - 00:38:41:07

And I'd really be grateful if you would take on board, um, the studies at, um, by Professor Dennis Henshaw that states that living near pylons, um, increases the risk of childhood and adult leukaemia. Um, also in 2007, he advised the UK government not to build new houses near existing pylons. Unfortunately, our houses are already there. Um, I'd like to draw your attention to the Draper report as well.

00:38:41:09 - 00:38:53:10

That states that living near, under 200m away from an overhead line or nearer overhead line. Increases your risk of cancers by 70%

00:38:55:08 - 00:38:59:27

when harm outweighs the benefits of these projects.

00:39:00:04 - 00:39:02:12

And could I ask you to start drawing to a conclusion?

00:39:02:21 - 00:39:33:04

Thank you. When the harm outweighs the benefits of these projects, um, I think, you know, we should have a hearing for not only to discuss alternatives, which are h v DC, which is less harmful than AC, and we should have another hearing by the Treasury. Green book hasn't been, um, used. I hope you'll take on board the full risk of all this and, um, reject this proposal in its whole entirety. Thank you.

00:39:33:08 - 00:39:34:02

Thank you.

00:39:37:08 - 00:39:42:29

And I then turn. Now turn to, uh, Mr. Lanham. Uh, And you have three minutes.

00:39:46:19 - 00:39:47:19

I am here.

00:39:47:21 - 00:39:48:06

To.

00:39:48:08 - 00:40:17:16

Oppose this project to start with. It will stop my fishing lake activity, make my cattle business non-viable and my turkey business contract will be cancelled. We have had several meetings with Fisher German personnel and asked questions about several aspects, but we are giving the same answers that they don't know and will let us know.

00:40:19:07 - 00:40:31:24

But you never get, but they never get back to us. We have even had a video link with Fisher German experts asking these questions, but the answer is always the same. They do not know.

00:40:33:27 - 00:40:49:14

You expect us to sign an agreement, but we have no input into this agreement. As usual, you are stalling for time and keeping us in the dark. We are only a small farm.

00:40:51:20 - 00:41:03:28

But we have been farming on this site since 1980. And if this progress, this project goes ahead as is, we will have to stop farming. We have no choice.

00:41:10:06 - 00:41:10:21

Thank you.

00:41:12:09 - 00:41:16:25

Thank you very much. Can you just turn your microphone off as well? Thank you very much.

00:41:18:16 - 00:41:30:09

I believe that Mr. Whitlock has actually joined us and he is actually next to. That's quite good timing. Thank you very much. Mr. was lucky. You have three minutes.

00:41:31:22 - 00:41:32:27

Thank you very much.

00:41:33:01 - 00:42:06:28

Uh, it's, uh I'm astonished to be speaking so quickly after having joined. Uh, this is in relation specifically to Linton Lower Dunton Road, just on the western side. Sorry. Yes. On the western side of Basil and just north of the main railway line. Um, only two issues I wanted to raise for the

inspectorate. Um, the first is that, um, we obviously believe this site is developable, inasmuch as it is in the allocation in Basel-Landschaft Local Plan.

00:42:07:10 - 00:42:38:02

Um, that plan has had a fairly turbulent ride through the process of, uh, failed attempts to be adopted, but now looks very likely to be adopted. So the site was purchased by my client and business partner some years ago with the definite intention to develop it. And we believed that that opportunity to develop is becoming very real and quite imminent. And that is something that needs to be borne in mind. And my other comment is simply, um, frustration of the lack of engagement.

00:42:39:01 - 00:43:11:07

The promoters agents have met with us on site and appear to understand everything we were saying to them, but we're quite unable, unwilling to explain any of the rationale in terms of the actual design as it affects our land. Um, we as an architect myself and with architect colleagues and engineer colleagues, we made some suggestions. But we are not at all clear that any of our comments have actually reached the people who are actually responsible for the technical aspects of this scheme.

00:43:11:11 - 00:43:57:17

And in fact, when a subsequent iteration of the proposal was issued, it was marginally worse, not better. It appeared to be a step backwards, not forwards. So we simply don't believe that there is any realistic engagement or dialogue. We totally support the idea of the national infrastructure. We see the need Uh, for this. Uh, so, um, but we would love to be, uh, be part of a conversation and to, uh, have some reassurance that the technical and specific points, site specific points we are making are actually reaching decision makers and that the rationale for the decisions, even if they're not in our favor, can at least be communicated to us.

00:43:57:19 - 00:44:14:22

Otherwise, there seems to be a huge divide and the agents who have been sent to meet with us. Um, I wonder whether they're actually a line of communication or more of a, uh, in fact, more of a barrier between us and the actual decision makers. And that's basically what I wanted to say. Thank you.

00:44:17:26 - 00:44:19:02

Thank you very much.

00:44:22:29 - 00:44:49:07

And I think you can return back to your seat. Thank you all very much for your contributions today. Uh, we have heard everyone who had registered to speak in this session. But can I just check before we close? Is there anyone else here today who has not spoken that would wish to be heard? If you can just look around the room not seeing any hands. Anybody online?

00:44:51:13 - 00:44:53:13

Nobody indicating there.

00:44:55:15 - 00:45:10:23

As we have noted earlier. If you could please submit what you have said today in writing as a written submission, that would be very helpful. And that should be by deadline one, which is Thursday, the 26th of February.

00:45:13:02 - 00:45:20:11

You will also be expecting the applicant to provide a written response to the oral comments that have been made today, at that same deadline.

00:45:23:11 - 00:45:55:15

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. Should any party still wish to make a contribution, but felt that they were unable to do so for whatever reason, they can make their contribution in writing by deadline one which I just said is Thursday the 26th of February. The next hearing.

00:45:57:16 - 00:46:16:21

Is in Orsett is tomorrow morning, and that's issue specific hearing one. And that will deal with the scope of development and alternatives. This will be in a different room from that which is here today. And the participants will be directed to that on arrival

00:46:18:14 - 00:46:23:28

times now. 1206 and this hearing is now closed. Thank you very much.