

To the Examining Authority,

I am a resident living within Dedham Vale, a nationally designated National Landscape (formerly Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty). I am also a parent of young children who are growing up here.

I write to formally object to the proposed overhead transmission line in its current form.

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1. Harm to a Protected National Landscape

Dedham Vale is not ordinary countryside. It is nationally recognised for its exceptional natural beauty, historic character, and cultural significance. The statutory purpose of its designation is to conserve and enhance these qualities.

Decision-makers are required to give great weight to protecting such landscapes.

The introduction of large-scale overhead pylons would:

- Industrialise open valley views
- Interrupt historic sightlines
- Introduce visually dominant vertical structures into a low-lying landscape
- Permanently alter the character of the area

This harm would be long-term and effectively irreversible. The visual and landscape impacts would extend far beyond the immediate footprint of the infrastructure.

In a protected landscape, the threshold for allowing such harm must be exceptionally high. I am not convinced that the case for overriding this protection has been adequately demonstrated.

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2. Impact on Families and Community Wellbeing

This proposal is not abstract infrastructure on a map. It directly affects the daily lives of those who live here.

My children are growing up in this landscape. It shapes their:

- Sense of place
- Mental wellbeing
- Connection to nature
- Understanding of rural heritage

The introduction of major industrial infrastructure into a protected valley fundamentally alters that lived environment. Rural communities should not be expected to absorb disproportionate impacts simply because they are less densely populated. National infrastructure should not come at the expense of the wellbeing of protected landscapes and the families who live within them.

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3. Consideration of Alternatives

I am concerned that insufficient weight appears to have been given to less harmful alternatives, including:

- Upgrading existing transmission infrastructure before constructing new lines
- Coordinated offshore grid solutions to reduce onshore impact
- Greater use of underground HVDC in sensitive and designated landscapes

In areas of national landscape protection, the starting presumption should be to minimise harm wherever possible. Overhead lines should not be the default solution where alternatives may reduce permanent landscape damage.

Where a designated National Landscape is affected, there should be clear and compelling evidence that:

- The need for this specific form of development is proven
- Less harmful alternatives have been fully and transparently examined
- The level of harm is unavoidable

I am not satisfied that this has been convincingly demonstrated.

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4. Cumulative and Long-Term Impact

This proposal does not exist in isolation. Grid expansion across the region contributes to cumulative industrialisation of rural areas.

The long-term effect is not simply visual. It affects:

- Tourism and local economy
- Agricultural character
- Property values
- Community cohesion
- The perception and identity of the area

The cumulative impact on Dedham Vale must be assessed not only in technical terms but in terms of how it erodes the qualities for which the area is nationally protected.

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5. Proportionality and Fairness

National infrastructure is necessary. However, it must be delivered in a way that is proportionate and equitable.

Protected landscapes are not empty spaces awaiting development. They are homes, ecosystems, heritage assets, and living communities.

The burden of national grid expansion should not fall disproportionately on rural National Landscapes when alternatives may exist that would reduce harm.

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Conclusion

I respectfully request that the Examining Authority:

- Give full and proper weight to the statutory protection afforded to Dedham Vale
- Rigorously scrutinise whether less harmful alternatives have been genuinely exhausted
- Carefully assess whether the permanent landscape harm is proportionate and justified

For these reasons, I object to the development as proposed.

Yours faithfully,

