

Presentation to Norwich to Tilbury Hearing

Date: Thursday 12th February 2026

By: Paul Walker of Whirledge and Nott Ltd

Representing: Essex Scouts and Guides

Subject: Impact of Scheme on the Essex International Scout and Guide Jamboree

---Start---

Good morning and thank you for the opportunity to speak,

My name is Paul Walker. I am a Director of Whirledge & Nott.

I echo my colleagues Freddie comments regarding poor engagement.

However, I am here today to speak on behalf of the Essex Scouts and Guides who together organise the Essex International Scout and Guide Jamboree.

This is a charitable, volunteer-led international youth event. It has been held in Essex since 1947.

Since 2012 it has taken place at Roxwell.

The proposed pylon route now cutting through the event site.

Two towers sit in the heart of the camping and activity areas. The overlay submitted with our representation makes that clear.

In 2024, it hosted 5,000 young people aged 10 to 17, supported by over 2,500 adult volunteers. There were participants from more than 40 countries.

It operates on a budget exceeding £2 million, entirely funded by those attending. It is one of the largest events of its kind in the UK, if not in Europe.

Significant charitable funds have been invested in permanent infrastructure on this 125-acre site.

Many thousands of hours of volunteer time are devoted to planning and delivering this event.

The impact is immediate and significant.

National Grid inform us that the 2028 Jamboree can not take place during construction period.

However once built National Grid claim their pylons and cables are compatible with Jamboree use.

Frankly that is ridiculous and demonstrates National Grids failure to recognise the true impact of their scheme.

NG will need to satisfy scouting and guiding safety teams, the local licensing authority but more importantly.... Parents.

Parents will not send their children to camp beneath pylons so, even if technically permissible, the perception of risk alone may make the event unviable.

The scheme therefore threatens the future of this charitable event. It risks wasting substantial charitable investment and volunteer time.

If the scheme proceeds, undergrounding this section is the only realistic mitigation that would materially reduce harm.

Failing that, National Grid must identify and fully fund a suitable alternative site, including replacing lost infrastructure and relocation costs.

But finding a suitable alternative site to is not straightforward or certain.

I acknowledge National Grid are in communication with the Jamboree team however without any assurances in place, the Trustees must make clear within this process that the scheme, as proposed, threatens the future of this significant international youth event.

And finally, a plea: National Grid must properly engage, listen and respond.

Behind these plans are real people, real charities, and thousands of young people whose experience and opportunity are at risk.

Thank you.

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