



The countryside charity
Norfolk

15 Pigg Lane
Norwich
NR3 1RS

Telephone: 01603 761660
Email:
planning@cprenorfolk.org.uk

www.cprenorfolk.org.uk

Working locally and nationally to
promote, protect and enhance a
beautiful and thriving countryside
for everyone's benefit.

To: Examining Authority, NorwichToTilbury@planninginspectorate.gov.uk

26 February 2026

Response Interested Party - CPRE Norfolk - Norwich to Tilbury

Reference number: [REDACTED]

Dear Planning Inspector,

I am writing to confirm that CPRE Norfolk maintains its objections to the Application by National Grid Electricity Transmission (NGET) for an Order Granting Development Consent for the Norwich to Tilbury Project as laid-out in our previous letter dated 24 November 2025 registering our interest in taking part in the examination. Our comments relate to all parts of the route, although with an emphasis on the part proposed to run through south Norfolk, and to the project as a whole.

On the whole, we are disappointed that no major changes have been made to the initial proposals consulted on in 2022 and 2023, despite the very clear public preference expressed for there to be no new pylon route, but instead for the upgrade to be carried out throughout by underground cabling, or most sensibly by the means of an offshore grid.

The overriding factor with the Norwich to Tilbury proposal appears to be the cost of the various options, which has resulted in using outmoded technology in the form of overhead cables and pylons for the majority of the project. Although the energy being transmitted may be "clean and green", the same cannot be said for the infrastructure.

While it is stressed that the cost of underground or offshore cabling is significantly more expensive than overhead transmission it is important to consider this expenditure in the context of the length of time the overhead structures will remain as a feature in the landscape. The existing line of pylons and overhead cables, west of the A140, was erected in the 1960s and has therefore negatively impacted parts of rural south Norfolk for 60 years - these current structures may well endure for a century or more in total. Presumably it is anticipated that the new pylon route will have similar longevity and consequently the cost of burying the cables should be viewed as an investment for the



The countryside charity
Norfolk

15 Pigg Lane
Norwich
NR3 1RS

Telephone: 01603 761660
Email:
planning@cprenorfolk.org.uk

www.cprenorfolk.org.uk

Working locally and nationally to
promote, protect and enhance a
beautiful and thriving countryside
for everyone's benefit.

next 100 years. In the context of such a lengthy time span the current price differential between the above and below ground options should not be afforded such significance. When making a choice about something that will affect people's lives into the 22nd century surely it is the best option, not the cheapest, that should be chosen?

Whilst we understand that National Grid has to operate under the laws, rules and guidance set down by national government, there is still much room for interpretation of these to ensure the best outcomes for residents, the environment and landscapes can be achieved, rather than allowing the pursuit of the lowest cost option to dictate the project.

Therefore, while the relevant National Policy Statements accept that overhead transmission lines and pylons are the starting point except for particularly sensitive locations and designated landscapes, there are serious concerns about the potential adverse landscape and visual effects of the proposed method of transmission. This, along with the hope that National Grid would wish to pursue a method which would reduce these harms and follow best practice leading to a more cost-efficient, and environmentally-beneficial long-term solution, we expect an offshore route or undergrounding to be used. It is disappointing to read nothing in the project's documentation which recognises the countryside of South Norfolk as being special and valued.

We argue that the assessment seriously undervalues the landscape of South Norfolk. It is not enough simply to plan for at least a 10% Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) particularly if some/all of this "gain" would be via offsite Biodiversity Units, which would do nothing to protect or enhance the landscape of South Norfolk.

If overhead transmission lines are adopted despite the many concerns, the Holford Rules would be followed. Although National Grid feels that "they have stood the test of time", it is hard to believe that they are not due for a major rethink. Of course, they would not be relevant if undergrounding was to be adopted instead. We draw attention to the supplementary note to the Holford Rules which states: "Where possible choose routes which minimise the effect on Special Landscape Areas, areas of Great Landscape Value and other similar designations of County, District or Local value." Here, we argue that much of the countryside across the proposed route in South Norfolk consists of landscape of Local value, while some specific locations have District, County or national designations in terms of being County Wildlife Sites, SSSIs etc.

Ideally the cabling from the offshore windfarms to Tilbury should be via an undersea route, not overland. If this is considered to be impractical due to the need to have an overhaul of the NSIP



The countryside charity
Norfolk

15 Pigg Lane
Norwich
NR3 1RS

Telephone: 01603 761660
Email:
planning@cprenorfolk.org.uk

www.cprenorfolk.org.uk

Working locally and nationally to
promote, protect and enhance a
beautiful and thriving countryside
for everyone's benefit.

process and a review of funding responsibilities, then underground cabling for the entire route from Norwich Main to Tilbury should be used.

For these reasons we object to the proposal.

[REDACTED]

CPRE Norfolk, Planning Officer