

The Norwich to Tilbury project's irreversible and damaging impact on local communities and the local natural environment has not been adequately taken into account in the proposal.

There are myriad other more affordable and sensible alternatives (detailed below) that have simply not been considered, which would avoid such a profoundly and destructive impact.

The Norwich to Tilbury project would involve the needless and thoughtless destruction of the natural environment: the tearing up of hundreds to thousands of trees and hedgerows, acres of prime farmland and natural habitats, the rerouting of roads, the blighting of East Anglia's chronicled wide skylines and the drastic alteration of local natural spaces, causing deep distress and unrest to local communities, wildlife and soils.

In particular in Arleigh, trees that are classified as ancient would be ripped out and habitats for an abundance of local wildlife destroyed. This includes protected strips and feeding areas for turtle doves, which have been established for several years to preserve habitats for this endangered species, as part of the RSPB'S Operation Turtle Dove.

My objections on the grounds of needless destruction of local wildlife habitats and ecosystems stand steadfast alongside objections based on more personal, nevertheless highly important, reasons. The proposed project would tear through the peaceful heart of the lanes and fields of Arleigh, Little Bromley and Burnt Heath, which form, for me and many others in the local village, the backdrop of a lifetime of precious memories spent growing up here.

From learning to ride bicycles down the lanes, childhood picnics in the fields, blackberry picking in the hedgerows and daily dog walks, through to more recent walking across these landscapes during the Covid-19 lockdown – a lifeline for me and many others in the midst of a global pandemic; all of these memories are inexorably woven into the calm, open and beautiful lands that would be devastated by the construction of 21 pylons, each 50 metres high, around Arleigh, and a huge substation (East Anglia Connection Node) plus two further substations and converter station (each 520m x 230m x 15m high), in the quiet fields that lie between the Arleigh, Grange and Little Bromley Roads.

The effect of the construction and establishment of this project on local communities' mental health would be staggering. For long-term residents, such as myself – a pervasive feeling of insecurity, loss of a safe home, foot-looseness, and a complete devastation of the warm sense of kith, kinship and pride that we have in our home and Arleigh.

The loss of our ability to protect our local natural spaces would be catastrophic. Access to such spaces is a fundamental pillar in the maintenance of good mental health and wellbeing. These lands were preserved and cared for by the generations that came before us; we have a profound responsibility to protect them for our local communities today and for generations to come.

While I remain in favour of renewable energy and the project's aim to connect off-shore windfarm energy to the mainland, there are other viable and cheaper alternatives that have simply NOT been considered, including :

an integrated offshore grid (an integrated offshore grid in the North Sea has been shown by National Grid ESO to save £2 billion and to reduce overall infrastructure by 50%)

HVDC underground cables (far less destructive than AC trenching, in Lincolnshire, National Grid chose HVDC underground instead of overhead lines on the basis of their being cheaper, quicker and less risky)

upgrading/upgrading of the existing infrastructure (Alternative Transmission Technologies are often lower cost than new infrastructure and can avoid the need for a needlessly energy-intensive, destructive and expensive total revamp)

Any of these alternatives would severely reduce the destruction of the local natural environment and the rippled effect on local communities' mental health, sense of community, safety, and belonging.

I object to the proposed project's needless and thoughtless destruction of my home and local ecosystem, its landscapes, wildlife, trees and soils, when the above less-damaging alternatives have not been proposed or even considered.

This is not the right solution. We cannot save the environment by destroying it.