

I am writing to formally object to the current proposals for the Norwich to Tilbury project. My property is situated in the historic heart of Ardleigh, [REDACTED]. My objection is based on two primary pillars: the unsuitable siting of the East Anglia Connection Node (EACN) and the unacceptable visual and socio-economic impact of overhead pylons on this sensitive landscape.

1. The Flawed Siting of the EACN Substation

The decision to place the EACN in Ardleigh is, in my opinion, a failure of the alternatives under the Infrastructure Planning (EIA) Regulations 2017.

Failure of Alternatives: National Grid has prioritized short-term cost-saving over the economic health of this region. The "Options Appraisal" did not sufficiently weigh the benefits of an integrated offshore grid or the use of brownfield site, and the approach to costings has not been transparent to evidence the approach.

Breach of Design Rules: The proposal violates the Horlock Rules, specifically that pylons should avoid the "setting" of National Landscapes (AONBs). This massive industrial installation will dominate the rural approach to the Dedham Vale, permanently scarring the gateway to "Constable Country." On any reasonable persons consideration, there are plainly alternative sites suitable along the south-east coastline that have not been properly considered to avoid the unnecessary damage to the Dedham Vale.

Cumulative Burden: Under NPS EN-1, the Secretary of State must consider cumulative impacts. The construction of the EACN and the 7,500-home Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community, Ardleigh faces a level of industrialization that is disproportionate and unsustainable for a rural village. In addition, the pylons blight this landscape, damage tourism and farming, and the conservation zone Ardleigh and the national landscape.

2. The Impact on the Village Core and GP Surgery

My home and the adjacent GP Surgery represent the functional and social heart of the village. **Construction Blight:** The Street is the primary artery for this village. If the DCO is granted, the surgery will be subjected to years of heavy plant machinery, noise, and vibration. This will not only devalue homes but will impede access to essential healthcare for the most vulnerable members of our community.

Visual Dominance: The proposed 50-meter lattice towers (TB14/15) will be a constant reminder of the industrialization of our skyline. This violates the Holford Rules, which require the avoidance of areas of high amenity value and residential proximity.

3. The Case for Compulsory Undergrounding

If the Examining Authority is minded to approve this project as a "Critical National Infrastructure," it is morally imperative that the cables are undergrounded through the Ardleigh and Dedham Vale corridor.

Statutory Duty (CROW Act 2000): Section 85 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 requires the Secretary of State to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of National Landscapes. Pylons in this specific location directly contradict this statutory duty.

Policy Support in NPS EN-5: Section 2.11 of NPS EN-5 explicitly allows for undergrounding where the use of overhead lines is "unacceptable in planning terms." In a landscape of such profound heritage and tourism value as the Dedham Vale border, and Ardleigh's historic nature, conservation status and scheduled monument that will be destroyed by the pylons work clearly demonstrates the additional cost of undergrounding is a necessary and justified expense to protect a national asset.

Conclusion

The current proposal represents an "easy" engineering solution rather than a "hard" one, imposing a staggering burden on a single village and threatens the integrity of a nationally protected landscape.

I respectfully request that the Examining Authority recommends refusal of the project. Should the project proceed, a Requirement must be added to the DCO mandating that all transmission lines within the vicinity of Ardleigh and the Dedham Vale are laid underground.