

Comment on National Grid's Assessment of the Harm done to the Listed Property at Bounds Farm, Property Ref. 1147743 in National Grid's Heritage Assets EN020027-000370-6.11.A7 Environmental Statement.

Bounds Farm is a listed Grade 2 building with six acres of land which is immediately surrounded on the east, south and west boundaries by National Grid's proposed project. National Grid's mealy-mouthed assessment is that the Norwich to Tilbury project would mean that Bounds Farm would experience 'Mid Less than Substantial Harm'. As listed in National Grid's assessment, the immediately adjacent works would involve the construction of four pylons, a pulling location associated with one of the pylons, cable undergrounding works, overhead line mitigation works, overhead line crossing protection works, bellmouth works, temporary infiltration drainage works, a permanent bund, the EACN substation and the temporary haul road. In other words, it is possibly the most severely affected site on the entire Norwich to Tilbury route.

National Grid make no mention of the noise which is associated with the substation, nor do they say why they cannot move the substation further east, or construct it underground to reduce the visual and noise damage to the listed property, Bounds Farm. In addition it does not say that the overhead pylons and the cables underground will all have to cross Hungerdown Lane in an extremely narrow gap of 50 metres immediately adjacent to the southern boundary of Bounds Farm.

Bounds Farm dates back to the sixteenth century and was largely constructed with minimal foundations. The construction phase of the National Grid project may severely damage the structure of the property.

National Grid has failed to make any suggestion as to how the damage to Bounds Farm can be minimised, or what compensation they intend to make to the owners who will suffer injurious affection.

My name is Paul Whittle and my Interested Party Ref No. is [REDACTED]

The National Grid Application does not show the existing UK Power Networks 132kV overhead line which runs along the eastern edge of the proposed Ardleigh substation site with 5 pylons. Nor does it show the existing Little Bromley substation immediately to the south of the proposed Ardleigh substation.

No mention is made in the NG Application of the “wirescape” that will be created. Nor is any mention made of the close proximity of the North Falls and Five Estuaries substations which will convert the DC current from the windfarms into AC. In addition there are proposals for battery storage sites and the Tarchon Interconnector building. These will add to the industrialisation of this rural corner of Ardleigh.

There is a Grade 2 listed historical farmhouse in the immediate vicinity of the proposed Ardleigh substation. Instead of trying to reduce the effect on the property, National Grid have done their very best to increase the damage by drawing the “red line” tight up against the west, south and east boundaries. In addition NG have refused to reduce the noise from the Ardleigh substation by building it underground, as they have agreed to do at the Orsett substation location. These actions have blighted any chance of the owners selling up and down-sizing, now their family have left home. Apparently there is no discretionary purchase scheme offered by NG which is perhaps surprising bearing in mind their moral responsibility to safeguard historic buildings. National Grid have themselves stated that their project introduces tall infrastructure within the setting of the listed building, and that there is significant negative effect with no suitable mitigation to reduce this.

Furthermore the NG plan envisages both overhead and underground cables crossing Hungerdown Lane in the same narrow 50 yard gap which will involve the loss of mature oak trees and the blocking of a popular walking, cycling and riding route.

I would suggest a site visit by the Inspectors would be useful so they can have the opportunity to appreciate the full extent to which the NG application has breached the Holford rules. These were outlined by National Grid in their initial publication of the “East Anglia Green Energy Enablement (GREEN) Project of April 2022.

Since 2022, National Grid has consistently failed to live up to their promises!