

Re: Formal Objection to the Proposed Norwich to Tilbury Pylon Line

I am writing to formally object to the proposed Norwich to Tilbury overhead pylon line, which is currently planned to pass through my farm.

My family has owned and farmed this land continuously since the 1950s. Over several generations we have worked to maintain its productivity, improve soil health, and enhance its environmental value. The land is not simply a commercial asset; it represents decades of careful stewardship, long-term investment, and family commitment. The proposed route would cut directly through the heart of this holding and fundamentally alter its character and viability.

Firstly, the installation of large transmission pylons and associated infrastructure across productive agricultural land will cause permanent disruption to farm operations. The presence of pylons will restrict machinery access, complicate field layouts, reduce workable acreage, and create ongoing inefficiencies in cultivation, spraying, and harvesting. Construction works will also cause soil compaction, drainage damage, and long-term degradation of soil structure, which are particularly concerning for a working farm dependent on maintaining high-quality, productive land.

Secondly, and of equal concern, is the likely harm to wildlife. My farm supports established wild populations of grey partridge and skylark, both of which are farmland bird species of high conservation concern.

The grey partridge is a UK Biodiversity Action Plan priority species and is listed on the UK Red List of Birds of Conservation Concern due to severe long-term population decline. Skylarks are likewise Red Listed and have suffered dramatic reductions across arable landscapes. These classifications, recognised by organisations such as the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds and reflected in national environmental policy, underline the importance of safeguarding remaining breeding populations.

Both species depend on open, uninterrupted arable landscapes for successful nesting and feeding. Skylarks are particularly sensitive to vertical structures within otherwise open farmland, and evidence shows breeding density declines in proximity to tall infrastructure. The erection of pylons and overhead lines would introduce prominent vertical features into established breeding territories, likely reducing productivity and displacing nesting pairs.

Grey partridges rely heavily on well-managed field margins, beetle banks, and undisturbed cover — habitats that have been established and maintained through long-term stewardship. Construction disturbance, habitat fragmentation, heavy vehicle access, and ongoing maintenance activity would undermine years of environmental management effort and increase predation risk by providing additional perching and vantage points for corvids and raptors.

This is especially concerning in the context of current Environmental Land Management (ELM) schemes promoted by the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs, which incentivise farmers to restore biodiversity and support farmland bird recovery. The proposed infrastructure risks directly conflicting with these nationally supported objectives and reversing measurable conservation gains achieved over decades of responsible farming.

Thirdly, the proposal will have a significant visual and landscape impact. The rural character of this area — carefully managed by the same family for over seventy years — will be fundamentally altered by the introduction of large-scale industrial infrastructure, affecting not only my property but also the wider community and countryside.

There are also serious concerns regarding property value, business continuity, and long-term land viability. The presence of high-voltage overhead lines can reduce land value and create uncertainty for future agricultural investment and succession planning, particularly for a multi-generational family farm.

I remain concerned that alternative options have not been given sufficient consideration. Underground cabling, alternative routing along existing infrastructure corridors, or offshore solutions may significantly reduce the impact on productive farmland and sensitive wildlife habitats. It is essential that less harmful alternatives are fully and transparently assessed before proceeding with a route that causes avoidable and permanent damage.

Given the long-term consequences of this proposal, I request:

1. A full and transparent assessment of alternative routes and technologies.
2. A detailed agricultural impact assessment specific to my holding.
3. A comprehensive ecological impact assessment addressing farmland bird populations, including grey partridge and skylark breeding territories.
4. Demonstration of compliance with national biodiversity policy and Environmental Land Management objectives.
5. Clear information regarding compensation, long-term access rights, and reinstatement standards.
6. Meaningful engagement with directly affected landowners before any decisions are finalised.

This land has been farmed responsibly by my family since the 1950s. The decisions made now will affect not only my current livelihood but the future of a long-established family enterprise and the wildlife it supports. At a time when national policy rightly prioritises biodiversity recovery and sustainable land management, it would be deeply contradictory to approve infrastructure that materially damages both.

I therefore urge you to reconsider the current route and explore alternatives that avoid unnecessary harm to productive farmland, rural heritage, and biodiversity.

I would appreciate written confirmation that this objection has been received and formally recorded as part of the consultation process.