

I make the following comments on NG's "Document: 8.4.1 Applicant's Comments on Relevant Representations" based on having searched it for references to myself/my wife, our property and the road we live on and the villages of Great and Little Waltham;

In line with previous comments on the high no. of issues raised relating to the "Waltham Gap" in previous submissions and, particularly, in person representations at the Orsett Hall hearing: there are over 80 references to the above search items in this document - further highlighting the need for a far more detailed set of responses and alternative options/changes from NG and a focused inspection at the location by the EA.

Summarising across those 80+ references in the document;

NG confirm in the document that heritage, including listed and unlisted, assets within 1.5km of the route will suffer permanent, serious harm.

A cross-check between Google Maps and the N2T interactive map shows a very large no. of grade I and II listed assets in that scope, including almost all of Little Waltham, Great Waltham, Howe Street and Broads Green and their respective conservation zones - a total of over 70 "permanently and significantly damaged" assets.

Despite this, NG still offer no additional mitigations or alternatives that would reduce that enormous impact, no direct engagement with the owners of a large no. of them.

NG highlight their view that the most severe permanent impacts will be to properties and assets within 500m of the route (i.e. all of the population formally involved in consultations) while throughout the rest of the document continuing to disregard almost all of the specific issues raised by people living so close to the route. Our house will be less than 50m from the currently proposed route so even on a linear scale of rising impact: more than 10 times more affected than the further properties within the 500m distance.

For a squared law impact like that for FMG radiation that equates to more than 100 times the impact and risk of other properties already regarded as permanently and significantly affected.

Again NG have done little more than continue to disregard these issues, pointing only (many times in the document) to the designation of the project as a Critical NSP giving them a get out of jail free card for all the most serious concerns.

This is, at best, morally bankrupt at a national government level.

NG's response to mitigation options for the Waltham Gap concerns (alternative technologies, alternative routes, changed pylon locations, undergrounding, T-pylons, etc.) continues to be only based on least cost with no regard whatsoever to the tangible and intangible costs to the landscape, ecology and communities along the route. Additional costs (not that significant against the overall project costs in most cases if, as indicated in the document, the Walthams are the area most requiring further changes. What cost to NG vs. (their own words) significant permanent damage to residents and heritage assets and accelerated, permanent damage to already highly stressed and damaged (already amongst the worst globally) flora, fauna and soil.

A simple viewing of the Chelmer Valley section of the route from our property, both up and down the route, shows that the shift from the original proposal to shorter "denser" lattice pylons significantly worsens the visual impact for almost all residents and other users transiting the area. NG's response on that change still do not reflect the actual situation when viewed properly at the site.

NG have confirmed in their response that they are considering a reversion to the original pylon type and locations though this is not by any means confirmed and subject to the "get out of jail" caveat, also mentioned in the responses that despite all the issues raised and discussions thereof they reserve the right to change it and use different pylons, locations and technologies if they choose.

NG refer to a single resident who requested the re-location and change in type of the pylons around the Langley's deer park, seemingly ignoring all the others who are more affected by it including almost all residents of Little Waltham.

NG persist in not clarifying how the removal of a large no. of trees (including many mature and valuable specimens) from the Walthams area will be mitigated nor what any proposed mitigation (such as planting new, immature ones of less valuable species several hundred miles away as they have previously mentioned) might do to benefit the people and animals who lost the originals!

On page 147 NG state:

"The 6.13.A4 Environmental Statement Appendix 13.4 - Residential Visual Amenity Assessment [APP 233 and APP-234] (RVAA) was prepared in line with the Landscape Institute's Technical Guidance Note 2/19 Residential Visual Amenity Assessment<sup>3</sup>. The RVAA recognises that the Project would have a large magnitude of effect upon the visual amenity of the residents of some of the properties in the Chelmsford City Council administrative area. In all such cases, following the required more detailed assessment, it was found that the Project would not block the only available view from any property, would not be overwhelming in views in all directions from any, would not be unpleasantly encroaching upon any, and would not be inescapably dominant in views from any. Consequently, the Project was not found to breach the 'residential visual amenity threshold' of any property in this area."

With respect to my house this statement is completely false and effectively utter nonsense. The house is a converted ex-public house in a prominent location and one of the most affected along the entire route given its proximity to it. It is well known in the area due to its prominent position and can quite reasonably be regarded as a non-listed heritage asset. Almost all of its more than 30 windows directly face either the point where the route crosses the Chelmer (where the route sweeps right across the view - starting to the East as it passes very close to the house and shifting fully across it as it climbs the valley towards Chatham Green) or the section that climbs the southern part of the valley behind us towards Broads Green.

Only three windows (one of them above head height in a store cupboard and one opaqued glass in a toilet - so to all intents and purposes only one in total affected) are not impacted by the pylons/route. For ALL of the others there is no effective screening at all and ALL of the pylons proposed to be changed to lower height/side lattice ones at the Walthams will be fully visible and will absolutely unquestionably be the dominant feature seen from the house from, effectively, all our windows. The statement says clearly that all the houses located close to the route were properly assessed and the impacts are minor and mitigable - whoever authored that report clearly had no idea of the extreme level of impact we are facing less than 50m from the route and with all our views looking directly at the pylons.

I have to add that I am shocked that this statement could have been made with any even cursory knowledge of the landscape.

As commented previously when we stood at the windows in our house referred to above, on the ground floor, first floor and loft levels, with Fisher German surveyors they saw first hand how much it affects not only our own views but also those of the many houses in Little Waltham whose windows are visible from ours (and hence ours from theirs and with them a clear view of the pylon proposed to be a few meters from our property).

It is imperative that the PI and EA meet at our location with NG, FG and the authors of the above statement to categorically show how far removed from the truth it is and I again offer to assist in any way possible such a visit.